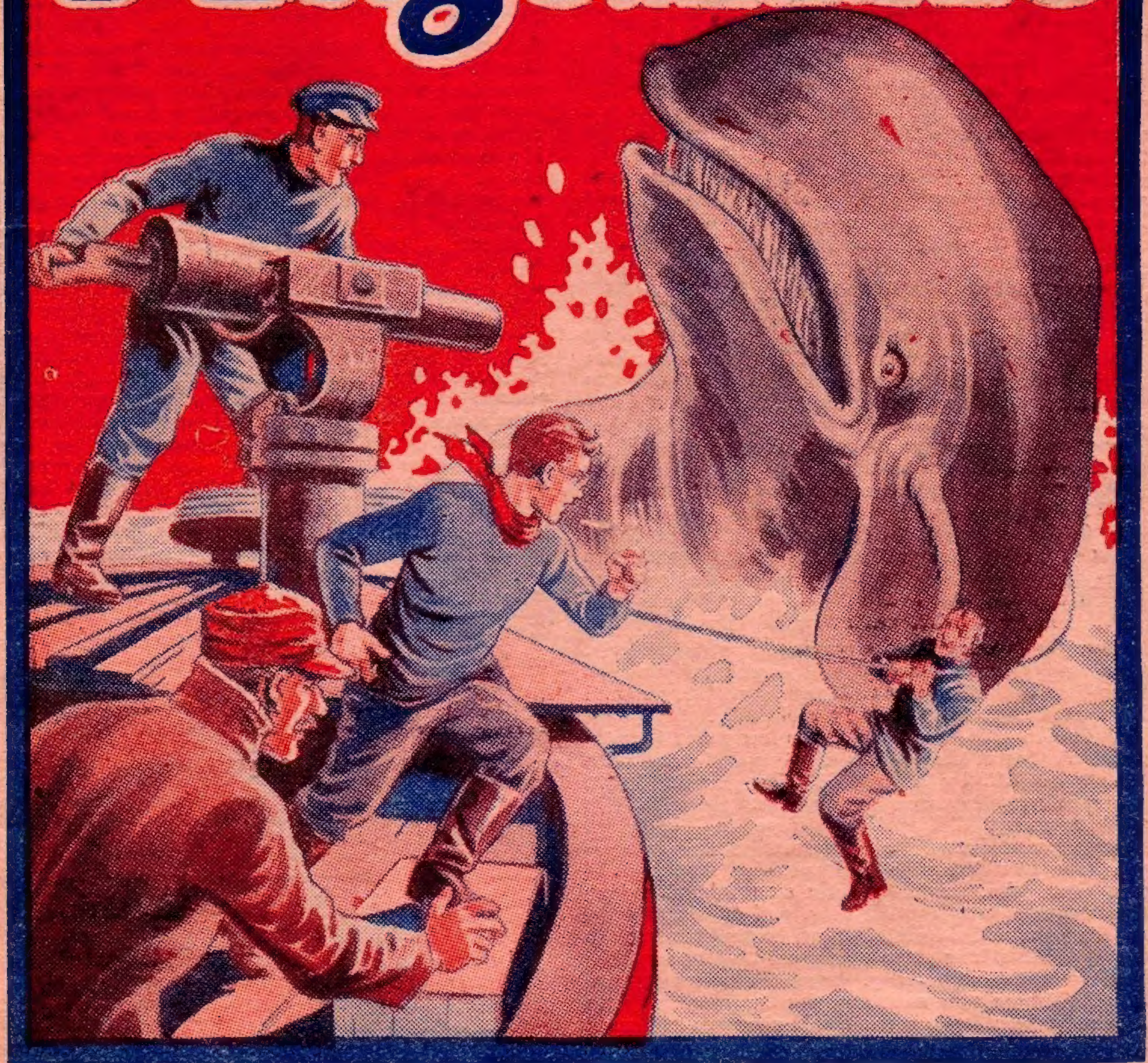


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Boys' 2D Magazine

EVERY SATURDAY



CAPTAIN CONSTERNATION—WHALE KILLER INSIDE

VOL. XIX—No. 513—January 2, 1932

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SPECIAL PAGE FOR MEMBERS OF THE B.M. REDSKIN LEAGUE.



MORE HINTS AND NEWS FOR LEAGUERS

JOIN THE LEAGUE, CHUMS —AND SHARE ITS BENEFITS

HAIL, Braves,

Here is another prize letter. It is by far the most interesting, and as I was going to tell you a few things about codes in general, it is very apt for the occasion.

The writer, by the way, forgot to send his name and address. He signs the letter *War Eagle*, and as I have the name of his town, from the post-mark, I shall be able to verify his address when he claims his prize.

Here is part of the letter:—

... We have got quite expert in using the codes. Since your last competition, when we had to solve a strange code, our rivals, the Blackfeet Tribe, have been solving a lot of our codes. But we've beaten them now. We call each code in the book by a letter, or in the number codes by a figure, and instead of starting our message "Special Message Code," or whatever it happens to be, we just put down the code letter or figures, which means that particular code. So the person we write to knows from that what code is being used, and then leaves out the first letter, but if the Blackfeet get hold of it they try and solve the code with that first letter as well! We had some good fun some time ago, listening outside the barn they use for a lodge, while they tried to decipher it.

Now that's what I call a brilliant idea, War Eagle. Of course, these codes in the book were only meant for a foundation for your code writings. They should be treated with variations for each tribe.

The science of secret writing is known as Cryptography. One of the earliest cryptograms was used a long time B.C. by a Greek at the Persian Court. Histiaeus was the name of this man. He wished to send a secret diplomatic message to his friend Aristagoras at home. So he selected a certain slave who was troubled with bad eyesight, and said he could cure him. He shaved the slave's head, saying this was necessary for the cure, and then wrote his message on the bald plate. Then he kept the man in secret till his hair grew again, and, of course, the Persians suspected nothing. When the hair was grown he said it was now necessary for the man to go to Miletus, where Aristagoras would complete the cure. Aristagoras shaved the man's head again, and so read the message without even the messenger being aware of what had happened!

The last code in our book, the *Special Secret Message Code*, is the one Julius Caesar used to use for sending his messages and instructions to his captains. He didn't always use the letter preceding,

but he used a key letter each time, which, of course, the receiver of the letter had to know. Suppose the key letter was *C*. Then *A* in the message would mean *C*, *B* would mean *D*, and so on through the alphabet. *X* would mean *Z*, and *Y*, *A* of course. A method that you can use, to mystify any enemies who may pick up the code, is to have a different key letter for each brave in the tribe. He must sign

the letter with his own Indian name, of course. And then the reader, seeing who the letter comes from, will remember what that person's key letter is, and so solve the code. You can easily remember the key numbers of seven or eight members of the tribe. If you aren't sure, you could let the letters go in order of age. Suppose you give the eldest the key *K*, then the next eldest will be *L*, and so on. You can think out other "Memory Joggers" for yourself.

TRIBES.—As you know, I started, some time ago, to compile a *Register of Tribes*. I want to keep in closer touch with the different Lodges of the League. There was a good response then—I have some 120 tribes on the roll, but they are not all there. So hurry up, you chiefs, and write to me full particulars of your tribes. Tell me the name of the tribe, the names, Indian names, ages and addresses of all members, and full particulars of your hunting-grounds and so on. Tell me what weapons you are using, who is the best Bowman and the best tracker, who has won most feathers, and what they were won for. If there is any dispute in the tribe, as to whether a certain member deserves a feather, write and ask my advice. Let me hear of the encounters you have with other tribes, the tactics you adopted, and the result of the meeting. If I could get a weekly or fortnightly letter from every tribe chief in England, then I should begin to feel happy! So come along, and see what you can do.

Good hunting till the next Pow-Wow,
THE CHIEF.

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Boys' Magazine, 2/1/32.

**HEROES OF THE
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"There She Blows!"
Slashing, Mansize Adventure
in the Antarctic Haunts of
the Wild Whale...a Tale of
Two Brothers. Crammed
with Excitement.

Human Salvage.

THE steam-whaler, *Northland*, lurched through the angry Antarctic seas, black smoke pouring from her twin funnels telling of sweated men below decks. Heavy seas of the South Pacific played with the ten thousand tons of her as though she were a feather-weight.

On the bridge a figure stood motionless. Contemptuous of oilskins, hands deep in the pockets of his reefer jacket, he did not seem to feel the half-frozen spray that rattled against face and body like a fusillade of pellets. His lean, clean-shaven face might have been carved out of the ice of one of the bergs that lolloped around the vessel. Only the steady puffs of smoke from the short black pipe clamped in his grim jaws gave evidence that he was living flesh and not statuesque stone.

His name was whispered in awe by all those tough, fearless men who braved fog, blizzards, and bergs in pursuit of the huge sea mammals—Captain Consternation! Steely eyed, grim-jawed, his own men knew him as a man of indomitable courage and iron will—a man who had long ago expunged the word "weakness" from his vocabulary. Monarch of the little busy world bounded by the steel walls of the *Northland*, of which he was owner and skipper, he ruled with a rod of iron.

An atmosphere of electric excitement pervaded the ship, for she was now nearing the Antarctic playgrounds of the huge Cetaceans. Below decks, all was ready for dealing with the victims of the deadly harpoon-gun. The revolving knives and crushers of the "spic" pressers, the huge steam-



kettles and the rest of the efficient modern apparatus waited for their work.

Suddenly a voice from the masthead wafted to the lonely figure on the bridge.

All the characters in the stories printed in this paper are fictitious, the names do not refer to any living person or persons.

"Flagged whale on the starboard bow, sah!"

Captain Consternation half-turned, his glasses were whipped to those keen, blue eyes and he peered in the direction indicated. Then he stiffened at the strange thing those binoculars revealed. A quarter of a mile away the carcass of a rorqual whale tossed on the surface of the ice-strewn sea. It had already been harpooned by some rival whaler, for a ragged flag fluttered from a long pole stuck in its back. But something else claimed Captain Consternation's surprised attention. Standing on the floating mammal was a human figure! A figure that waved a sodden jacket frantically to attract the whaling-ship's attention. Prostrate at this figure's feet lay another—apparently unconscious!

Then Captain Consternation awoke to action. Bells tinkled down in the engine-room, the sharp bows of the *Northland* swung from her course and she bore down on that queer human flotsam in the midst of the floating ice-pack.

Within a hundred yards of the dead whale she came to a stop, a boat was lowered, and, piloted by an old red-haired Scotsman, was paddled by four brawny sailors alongside.

Through his binoculars Captain Consternation could now make out every detail. He saw two boys; one who wore horn-rimmed spectacles was being helped into the ship's boat by the red-haired bos'n, the other leapt in lithely of his own accord and without assistance.

Now the row-boat came shooting back to the parent vessel and, with Sandy's expert hand on the tiller, was manipulated adroitly under the swinging davit-ropes. Within two minutes they were being ushered below by the old bos'n, where they were given a much-needed change of raiment and lashings of hot soup from the cook's galley.

"Grooh! This is a go!" grinned Dick Harkness—the boy who had signalled the whaler with his jacket. "I'd bet the fellows at St. Michael's would give a guinea a box to see you in that rig, Pete!"

Peter Elvey smiled almost sadly as he peered down through his horn-rimmed spectacles at the rough seaman's suit which had been loaned him from one of the fo'castle lockers until his own clothes were dry.

"Exactly, my dear Richard," he murmured. "But, fortunately, they will have no opportunity of doing so. I'm afraid this clobber will be worn out if I have to wear it until we get back to England."

Before they could exchange further bandinage, Sandy McIvor appeared. "Ye're to see the Old Man, the noo!" he told them. "An' I'll warn ye—ye'd better speak canny. 'Cos he's a terreeble mon to deal wi'."

Dick and Peter followed the bos'n to the master's cabin and were ushered into the presence of Captain Consternation. Sandy scuttled away and left them, so to speak, to their fate.

The whaling-captain faced them with a grim smile on his lean face. "Well?" he asked shortly. "How did it happen?"

Dick answered him, while Captain Consternation made notes in his log-book.

"We are the sole survivors of the steam-yacht, *Dorset*, six thousand tons, out of Plymouth. We struck an iceberg four hours before you picked us up, and foundered with all hands. Captain Grant was the master, and we, Dick Harkness and Peter Elvey, are the joint owners."

Neither noticed the sudden tightening of the whaler captain's jaws at mention of Dick's name.

"What were you doing in a private yacht in the Antarctic?" he asked.

"Oh," grinned Dick, "Pete, here, is dead nuts on science and that sort of thing. He was studying the flora and fauna of these parts."

"But you yourself?" Consternation's voice was harsher than usual as he asked the question.

"I?" Dick answered, and his voice had lost its cheery timbre, becoming almost as harsh as Captain Consternation's own. "I came to find the man who killed my brother!"

"Dick! What on earth do you mean?" exclaimed Peter Elvey, shocked for once out of his usual scholastic drawl. "I didn't even know you had a brother. You said you wanted to visit the Antarctic for plain adventure."

"Yes, for one of the greatest adventures of all—revenge! Listen. It isn't the sort of story a fellow tells his schoolmates—that's why you never knew about it, Peter. Dave, my brother, was about ten years older than me and he ran away to sea when I was six, so I don't remember much about him."

Captain Consternation puffed slowly at his short, black pipe as he listened, as though absorbed in the narrative.

In a queer, stifled voice, as though he were keeping a strong grip on his emotions, the boy went on: "My brother, it appeared, went out to the Arctic as a whale-fisher. He went under the name of James Smith, as he didn't want the gov'nor to trace him and so bring him back to England. When he was twenty-two, the pater—died. Our solicitors set out to trace him, as he was heir to my father's fortune—and at last their agents succeeded. But it was too late. Before they could actually meet him his body was found in the Spitzbergen snows. They identified him by his papers. The killer was caught red-handed by a police patrol—but he escaped. A copy of a photograph found on the fellow before he got away was sent to us in England, however, and I determined to find that man some day, and bring him to justice. When Peter, here, suggested we fit up a yacht to explore the Antarctic for geological and zoological research, I saw my opportunity, for I knew that most of the whaling has changed from the Arctic to the Antarctic and the killer, if he had stuck to his trade, would have transferred down here. I've found him sooner than I expected—CAPTAIN CONSTERNATION, you dirty killer!"

And with the words the overwrought lad sprang at the whale-hunter. The latter had recoiled at his words as though from a blow. Now, however, he recovered himself and met Dick's rush with an iron-hard fist that sent him whirling backwards off his feet. Then, striding to the cabin door, he sent a stentorian call for the mate echoing up the companionway.

A huge, beetle-browed ruffian came chumping down the stairs in answer and Captain Consternation addressed him.

"Mr. Brant! Here's two more lusties for your crew," he said in a voice like granite. "We don't carry passengers. No skulkers are allowed on my ship. Get 'em for'ard and—work 'em. If there's any insubordination report to me. And as for you, young fellow," turning to Dick who had climbed painfully to his feet. "You'll soon learn that it's dangerous to make wild charges against a Captain aboard his own ship. Get for'ard—and keep your mouth shut!"

For a moment it seemed that Dick would make another attempt to throw himself on the powerful figure of Captain Consternation. But as he met the other's hard, level gaze a sudden hopeless sense of impotence almost overwhelmed him. Without a word he turned and followed his chum and the other two above.

But there was black hatred in his heart. His usually cheery, boyish face was hard and set as it reflected the fury that consumed him.

The Killer Whale.

DICK HARKNESS wrestled with his demons as he stood on the gun-platform of the *Northland*. Around him was the intense silence of the short Antarctic night. The icy cold bit through the motley borrowed garments he wore like a thousand knives. But he did not appear to notice it. He was flogging his tired brain to evolve some plan for dealing with the problem that filled his mind.

How to bring Dave's killer to justice? With that thought still in his mind Dick succumbed to Nature and dropped into a troubled slumber. He was awakened by a familiar voice singing a shanty and starting up saw Sandy McIvor coming along the deck with his peculiar limping gait. Dick afterwards learned that Sandy had lost a toe when he was a blubber slicer in the days before mechanical apparatus for this purpose was invented.

"Och, an' what in the wurld is the wee Dickylad doing out o' his bed the morn?" greeted the cheery old Scottish whale fisher. "Was it to ken the Antarctic dawn?"

Dick grinned in answer: the torturing thoughts of the night were expunged from his mind by the beauty of the scene around. In the dawn-light the tops of the bergs were tipped a glowing pink, for all the world like giant ice-cakes; around the slowly moving vessel the pack ice had taken on varied hues of gold and red and blue while the mist swirled eerily from the gently swaying sea.

And then the spell was broken as two lofty jets went up about a quarter of a mile away. Immediately from the look-out on the mast behind Dick and Sandy came a sleepy howl: "There she blows!" And suddenly pandemonium broke out on the *Northland*. The engine-room bell rang, men leapt to their posts above and below deck, and the chase began.

Brant came clambering up to the gun platform and with a kick at Sandy McIvor harshly commanded the Scot to get on to the deck to make ready the boarding winch. Only a sense of discipline made Sandy obey. He knew it was simply a piece of terrorism on the mate's part, as everything had been prepared yesterday. Dick also was about to go but Brant told him to stay.

"You can stand by to gi' me a hand!" gritted the mate. "An' heaven help you—you pup—if you make a mistake!"

Under Brant's orders Dick attended to the setting of the big harpoon gun mounted on the platform on which they stood, placing the 5ft. 100lb. harpoon in the muzzle.

The whaling ship was now close in on its intended prey—slowing to *half speed* then *dead slow*! Oblivious

of the Nemesis that trailed it, the whale—a giant male sperm, most valuable and fearless of all the whales—was picking its way daintily through the pack ice. Blowing regularly, it was feeding on the tiny fish with which the waters swarmed.

Suddenly it dived and for fifteen minutes there was no sign of the giant sea mammal. In that space of time, however, Captain Consternation was not idle. He manœuvred the whale-boat gently in the direction whence the whale had disappeared and at last they were rewarded by a shout from the mast: "Here she comes!"

Brant crouched at the gun, his head level with the sighting bar, and with feet well apart waited for the "blow." It came! A colossal head broke the surface of the berg-strewn sea, then behind it showed the massive tail. Mr. Whale was broadside on to the



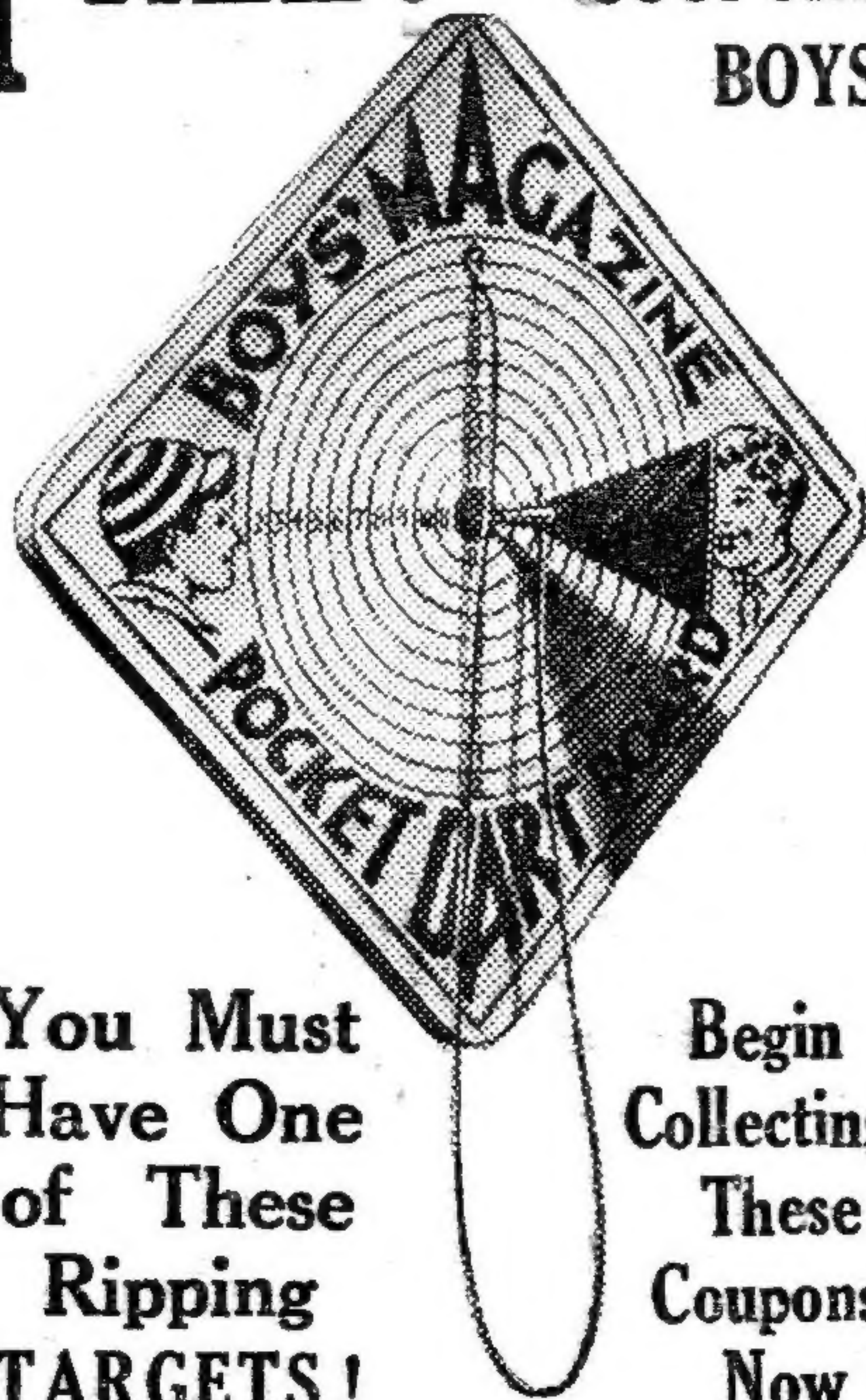
A ROGUE ATONES.—The harpoon missed the mutinous crew, and then as it struck a bulwark Brant atoned for his villainy. He dashed forward in an attempt to heave it overboard before the time charge could go off. But even as he reached it, there was a stentorian explosion.

Northland and within ten yards of the harpoon gun in the bows.

"Let her have it, Mr. Brant!" hissed a voice from the bridge. The mate, bully and scoundrel as he was, acted with sailor-like precision. *Bang!* A roar and a rattle as the forerunner went out behind the hurtling harpoon.

"Got her!" gasped a tense voice behind Dick. It was Peter Elvey, who had climbed on to the gun-platform unobserved by the mate in his absorbed concentration on his task. He was right. Even as the whale, scenting danger too late, began to dive, the shell-tipped harpoon sank into its back a few inches from the steel-hard backbone. A second later there was a dull explosion as the timed explosive in the harpoon-head went off. Dick and Peter watched in thrilled silence. They saw the sudden convulsive

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leap of the giant, saw its dripping bulk rear almost completely out of the water and then came sudden, devastating tragedy.

The mate jerked round on Dick, pig-eyes squinting angrily.

"What'n hades yer gettin' in my way for. Take that, you scum!" he roared. "That" was a left-arm swing to Dick's jaw, aimed with all Brant's viciousness behind it. It took the boy on the point, knocking him sideways and down. A yell from Peter, a hoarse cry from the bridge and Dick, unable to save himself, went headlong from the gun-platform—to hurtle down towards the icy waters between the whale and the ship.

"Man overboard!" The dread cry rang through the ship. And men rushed to the bow below the gun-platform from which Dick had fallen. The foremost were in time to see the next stage in this strange drama of the Antarctic. For Dick, tumbling willy-

nilly through space, still managed to keep his head. Nothing could save him if he fell in the path of the maddened whale. But before he reached the waters his presence of mind saved him. Even as he dropped his clutching fingers closed spasmodically on to the forerunner attached to the harpoon and for tense seconds he swung in the air. In front of him he had a dizzy impression of the rearing form of the whale silhouetted against the white bergs; behind rose the sheer cut-water of the whaler.

For tense seconds time stood still for Dick while he swung 'twixt sea and sky in the strangest position perhaps ever experienced by a human being.

Then he felt the line to which he was holding sink towards the water as the whale subsided from its prodigious leap out of the sea. So he met horror face to face. For, hardly had his body touched the water than the huge bulk of the sea mammal whirled round and the head with its cascade from the blow-hole came level with Dick's sight. The maddened whale was about to attack him!* He realised the dreadful fact even as a square-built determined figure scrambled along the slippery gangway from the bridge to the gun-platform. It was Captain Consternation and he held a razor-sharp hand-harpoon in his right fist.

"Out of the way, boy!" he snapped, and shoved Peter Elvey who had been about to dive in in a mad rescue attempt, out of his path. Then, with a concerted gasp from his men echoing in his ears he dived clean as a whistle. Down . . . down . . . into the icy depths. When he again broke the surface he was between Dick and the wounded whale. In the nick of time, it seemed—for already the monster was in motion.

With a strange animal roaring sound, and blowing spasmodically, it slid towards the pigmy humans in its path. Captain Consternation had a nightmare vision of a huge cavern mouth, armed with ten inch molars, behind it the flat-topped almost square-fronted head of the mammal with the harpoon like a periscope behind. Then he dived—even as those dreadful jaws snapped shut. Harpoon ready, he held his breath while he rose beneath the monstrous mammal to perform the most daring piece of madness his chequered career had known. His left hand encountered the sliding bulk of the whale and the moment had come. If he failed to reach a fatal spot his life would pay the penalty. Yet he scarcely gave the possibility a thought as he struck his blow for the life of the boy who had called him killer!

Deep into the blubber beneath the whaleskin plunged the harpoon, and then Captain Consternation found himself swimming in a sea of red. For fully a minute the mighty tail slashed the sea to foam as the mighty mammal went through its death agonies; then it subsided still on the surface of the icy sea as the life ebbed away.

Captain Consternation swam a lazy breast stroke to the port side of the *Northland*, giving Dick, who had been a tense spectator of the duel, a short command to follow him. Sandy McIvor was already at one of the derricks used to hoist the whale-carasses aboard, and he lowered the chain for Dick and his chief. Then, as both gripped it, Sandy gave the order to the man at the "donkey" to haul away, and up came the human freight to the deck once more.

"All right, McIvor—get the blubber flagged and carry on," commanded Captain Consternation, as cool as though he just been for a morning dip. "You, Harkness, get below and change togs. Tell the mate to see me in my cabin in ten minutes."

* Most species of whales, despite their huge bulk, are timid and will not attack man. The sperm-whale, however, is extremely pugnacious. It has been known to attack and destroy even large vessels, overturning and sinking them. It is suggested that many ships which have been lost without trace were sunk by whales.

League Braves! The Chief Wants

And the master of the *Northland* stalked below. As he went, Dick swung off to the fo'castle. He changed once more from his own dripping clothes into a spare suit of Sandy's; but now he did notice the difference in fit between the b seaman's garments and his own boyish frame. His mind was whirling round the startling thing he had seen in the moment that Captain had gripped the derrick-chain out of his hand. He had seen the Captain's unlinked shirt.

Simultaneously, the rest of the mutineers surged forward in an angry wave. The little handful who had remained loyal found themselves the centre of a wild whirling combat. Dick and Peter Elvey hit out—and the former grunted with satisfaction—his fist connected with a bristly chin, sending its owner down for a fifteen minute count! He grinned at Sandy Melvor plastering a brawny stoker every deck. Captain Consternation regret his hot-headedness. Of the little band, Brant, true colours. He was on to further efforts. "or. It's coming!" A pile-driving full under the ground and ers. But ndful to

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his head, but brisk swimming under water warmed him a little and he was glowing healthily as he reached the lolloping carcase of the huge whale. Air had been pumped into her to keep her afloat, though fortunately Captain Consternation's last order—to "flag" her and cast her off—had not been obeyed. The mutineers were to regret that disobedience heartily.

"Ready for the next move!" hissed Dave's voice in his ear, and Dick nodded. Then hand over hand they went up the hawser from the whale to the windlass in the bows. They reached the deck and scrambled over silently. Another short climb and they found themselves on the gun-platform. And a grunt of satisfaction escaped Captain Consternation

was at work that night. Even as the mutineers came yelling the untended ship gave a sudden lurch and a crash sounded as her bows hit a sunken berg. Following hard on it a roar sounded from the harpoon gun and the deadly missile hurtled from its barrel across the deck.

Captain Consternation, tensed at the controls, had all unwittingly discharged the harpoon as the sudden jolt threw him off his balance. Fortunately the harpoon missed the rushing crew and crashed against the bulwarks.

And then Brant atoned for some of his villainy. He darted forward to try to throw the one hundred pound harpoon overboard before the three-second time fuse reached the charge.

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as he found that the gun was already loaded with a bomb-laden harpoon.

"Now we shan't be long!" he grinned, and swinging the gun on its swivel he pointed it at the entrance to the fo'c'stle. Then:

"Belay there, you swabs. Come out!" he roared in his stentorian voice. As though electrified, Brant and the hands came on to the fore deck and they gasped at sight of the shadowy figures limned against the sky on the gun platform. They gasped still more when they descried the wicked point of the loaded harpoon trained upon them.

"Now then, men! I've got the upper hand!" snapped Consternation. "If you don't surrender I'll blow you and the fo'castle to blazes.

Whether he would have carried out his threat was doubtful. And Brant thought so, too.

"Come on, you rats!" he shouted desperately. "Rush 'em! They daren't shoot!"

And Captain Consternation realised that Brant had called his bluff as the fellow came charging forward with the more daring of the mutineers at his heels. But Fate, luck—call it what you will—

He was half-way across the open deck when there was a dull, reverberating roar and the harpoon disintegrated in a crimson splash. One of the flying pieces of metal hit the mate in the chest and he crashed to the deck. Part of the ship's side was blown away by the explosion, but no other casualties occurred.

Captain Consternation and Dick were the first to reach that still figure on the deck, the crew, utterly unnerved at Brant's fate, coming sheepishly behind them.

When they turned the bullying mate over they found he still breathed—though faintly. The master of the *Northland* pressed his brandy flask to the man's lips and he opened his eyes dazedly as the fiery spirit fanned his ebbing life into momentary flame.

He looked into the eyes of the man who held him in his arms.

"Harkness!" he breathed. "I'm—I'm going out, but I'll try to undo a little of the wrong I've done you before I go. I killed Ephraim Higgins. I hated

(Continued on next page.)

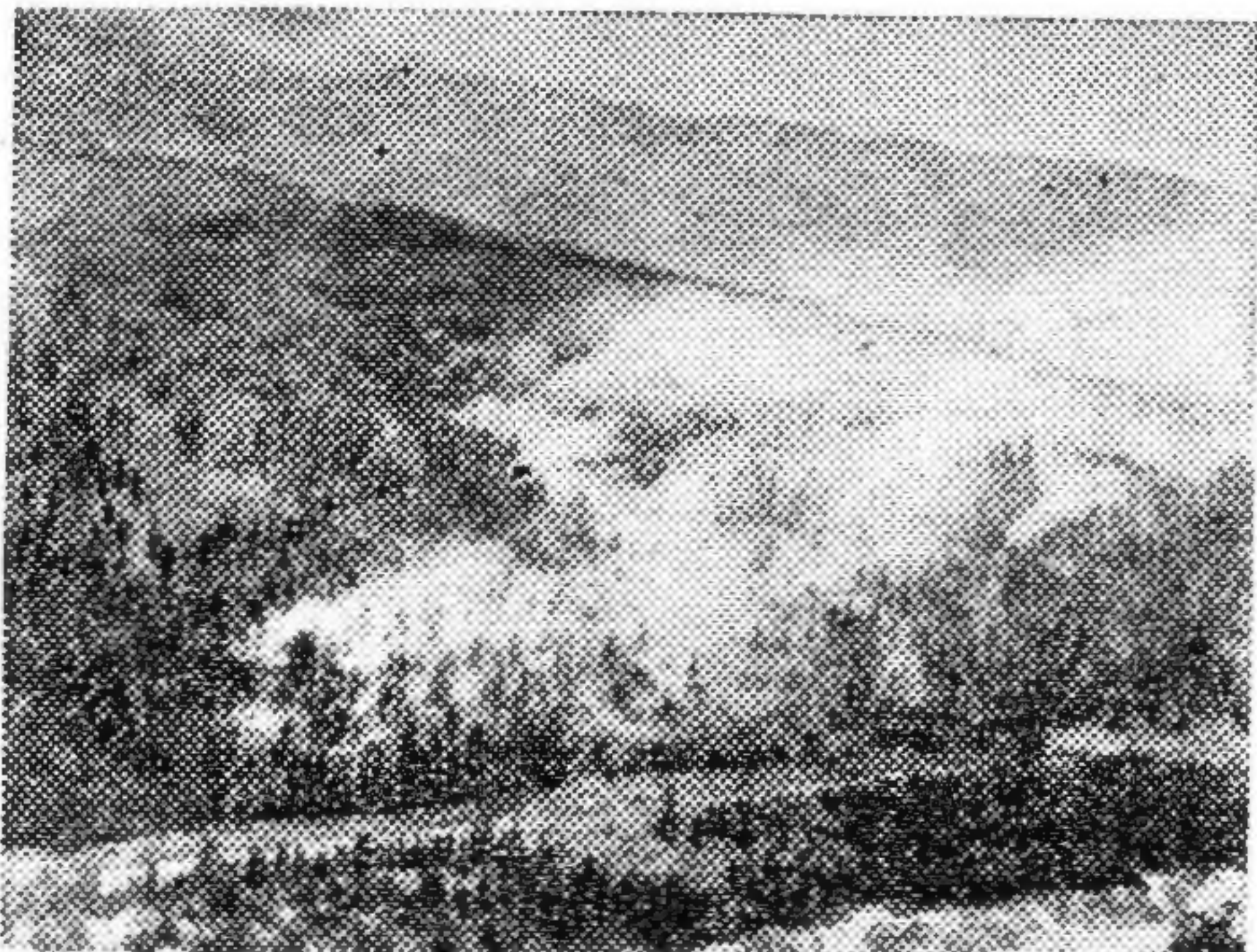
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FIGHTING FOREST FIRES IN CANADA!

A FOREST fire is, without doubt, an awesome and fearsome spectacle, but the harm and damage it does is so incalculable that, despite its wonder and magnificence it is a scene greatly feared throughout the Dominion of Canada.

A most elaborate system is in force to fight these fires. Rangers patrol the forest areas on the look-out for tell-tale smoke, and there are also high towers erected from which the surrounding countryside can be viewed.

From its inception to its extinction the forest fire is an unknown quantity. It is impossible to know how far it will spread; minutes are the prime factor in a



fire fight—twenty minutes sometimes mean the difference between a small blaze easily handled and one developing into a roaring overhead fire devouring tens of thousands of pounds' worth of precious timber.

In Canada the railway companies are held responsible for any fires which start alongside their lines, unless they can prove the blaze was not started by one of their engines. As a consequence, the railway companies naturally take very great care to arrange that if cinders from the engine smoke-stack cause a conflagration, they have methods handy for checking it. Twenty fire-fighting tank cars, varying in



capacity from 3,000 to 13,000 gallons, equipped with steam pumps operated from the hauling locomotive, are stationed at strategic points along a railway route and are kept in constant readiness to rush to the scene of a blaze.

Throughout the entire forested area some form of special precaution is observed. On the particularly hazardous parts fire patrolmen are employed; at present there are some men devoting their entire time during the fire season, i.e., from April 1st to November 1st, to patrolling the rights-of-way, using small petrol or hand-driven rail cars in order to get over the track.

Fireguards, or trenches empty of all vegetation, are sometimes ploughed on particularly hazardous parts of the forested lines, and on the prairie sections, in order to control burning operations and to prevent the spread of any fires which may start.

Another possible serious result of a big forest fire is floods. When the hillsides are stripped of all vegetation, there is a rapid water run-off into the valleys.

The most important single development in forest fire protection in late years has been the use of aircraft. Where lakes are numerous flying-boats can be used both for detection and for the transportation of fire-fighters and their equipment to fires in remote areas. Where safe landing-places are few, land machines are used for the detection and inspection of fires only. The aircraft are equipped with wireless and can report the exact location of a fire as soon as it has been detected.

CAPTAIN CONSTERNATION—WHALE KILLER! (Continued from previous page.)

the fellow, it doesn't matter why now, and I'd sworn to 'get' him. I was hiding in the scrub when he waylaid you. I didn't know you were there, and I knifed him in the moment you shot him. Your shot went wide. Ever since I've stayed by you, keeping you from finding out that it was a knife, and not your bullet, that killed him. I've planned to kill you, but never had a chance to do it unsuspected. Then your brother came on board, and I saw I had to get rid of him or you, quickly, so I decided to tell the crew you were wanted for the killing of Ephraim Higgins—with this result. Good-bye . . . good . . . luck. . . ."

And the soul of the plotter went out into the

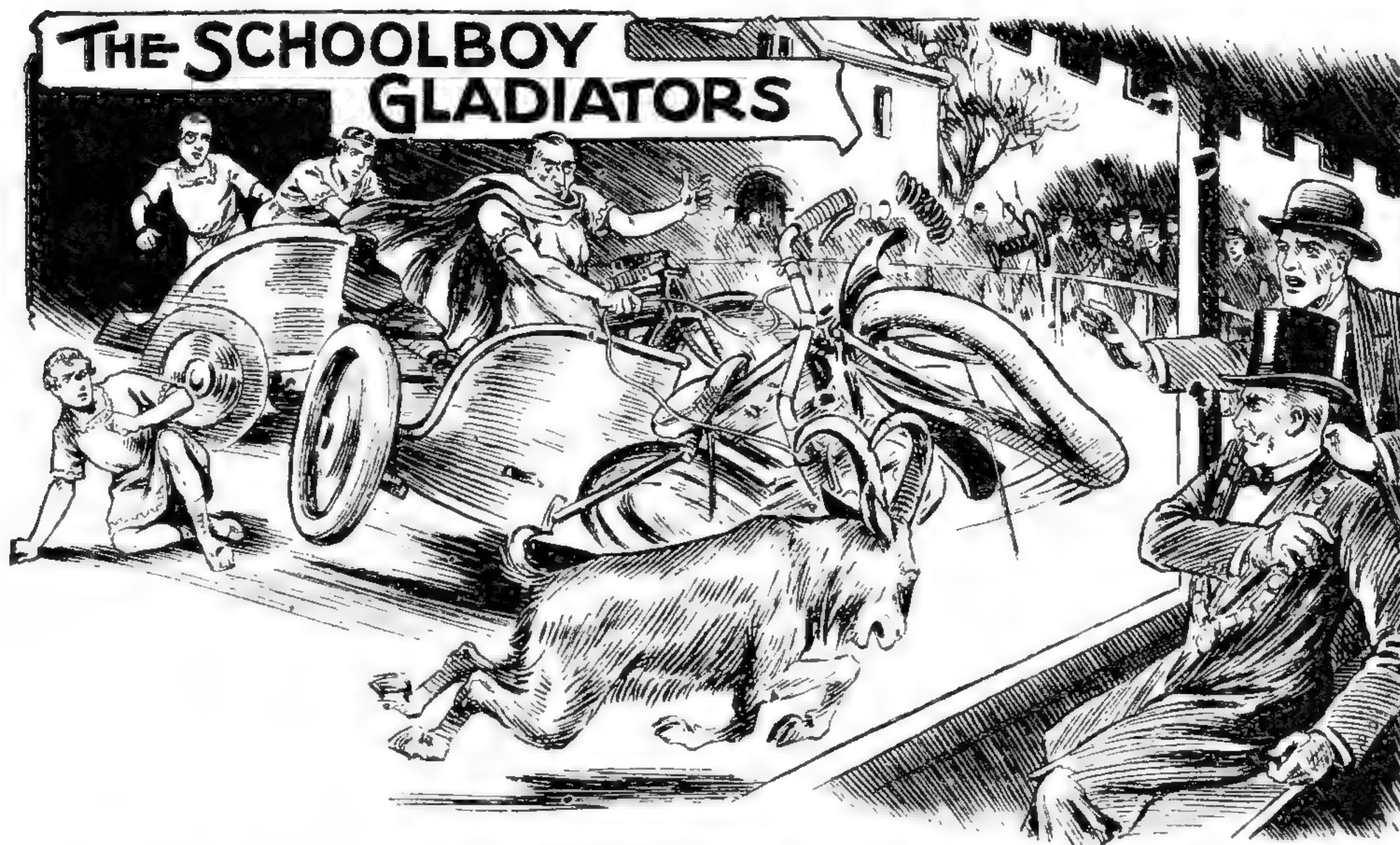
darkness to repeat his confession at the Bar of All Eternity.

MORNING found the *Northland* steaming gaily through the Antarctic seas, with whales blowing industriously around, and her crew ready for work as though nothing had happened. Sandy McIvor strutted with his queer gait about the deck in the uniform of first mate! But Captain Consternation had gone forever. In his place was Dave Harkness, and Dave had other plans.

He swung the bows due North and telegraphed to the engine room: *Full Speed Ahead*—"For England," Dick finished. "You whale-killer!" and dug his brother in the ribs.

Ripping complete animal yarn next week, chaps—and a Smashing Free Wonder Book. Tell all your pals about "Wild Beasts of the Jungle!"

THE BOYS OF ST. GIDDY'S LATEST AMAZING ESCAPE! ROMAN GAMES, CHARIOT RACES, AND A REGULAR RIOT OF FUN TO CELEBRATE SPEECH DAY!



A Fanatical Plotter's Evil Plan to Make Mincemeat of the Mayor—Put to Nought by Johnny Gee & Co.—Not Forgetting Their Giddy Goat!

The Big "Butt."

"WELL, that's that settled, chaps," remarked Johnny Gee, the cheery skipper of the Remove form at St. Giddy's. "Now let's cut across the lawn and get on to the road over the fence. We're a bit late."

The juniors had just come down the wide steps of Craig House, the residence of Captain Monteith, Mayor of Merivale. As was the time-honoured custom, Johnny, as Captain of the Lower School, had been to request the Mayor's presence at the Speech Day celebrations, when all the prizes for the preceding year were distributed by the Chairman of the Governors of the School. It was the custom for the Mayor to be present, and every boy expected his parents to turn up. The main point that concerned Johnny and his chums, however, was that it was usual for the Remove to present some sort of show or display. Sometimes it was a theatrical show—but this year something new had been arranged.

"That was a dashed good idea of yours, Tony, to make it a Gladiatorial show this year," said Dick Bannister, as they hurried through the bushes of the spacious garden. "Specially as Captain Monteith's dead nuts on digging up Roman remains. The old boy seemed quite bucked with the idea, didn't he?"

"He certainly did," grinned Johnny. "But we've no time to talk now—we shall be late—Oh! Look!"

Johnny suddenly drew back with a gasp of surprise behind a clump of rhododendrons. A wide patch of lawn was before them, and at the other side, twenty yards away, a man stood, in the bright moonlight. And the horrified juniors saw that he was pointing a rifle straight at the shadow that showed on the

blind of one of Captain Monteith's drawing-room windows. It was impossible to reach the man in time to prevent him firing the fatal shot. Johnny's heart filled with despair as he saw the man's finger curving over the trigger. He gave a shout of horror—and it changed to surprise even as he uttered it.

For, from the bushes behind the would-be assassin, a dark, purposeful figure came rocketing—a figure that streaked through the moonlight, its feet kicking up the turf in an effort to increase its greased-lightning speed. Straight for the stranger it charged, and even in the moment that he pulled the trigger, something hit him with the force of a battering ram!

The exploding gun flew from his grasp, the bullet thudding harmlessly into the ground. The man, with a yell of pain, doubled up like a jack-knife, and fell to the ground.

Johnny and his chums suddenly burst into concerted roars of laughter. The sight of a gunman-killer scrambling to avoid the horns of—an irate billy-goat was too much for them.

"Ha, ha, ho, ho, ho!" roared Johnny, wiping the salt tears of much mirth from his eyes. "He got it then, 'all butt!' But come on—nab the blighter now he's lost his gun!"

The huge billy-goat, who seemed to have lost his ire now, was quietly grazing the turf. The man had scrambled to his feet, his coat torn, and his black felt hat trampled in the mud. In the momentary glimpse they had of him, they saw that his features were swarthy, of the Latin type, and black hair fell around his forehead.

Then, in a moment, he was gone through the bushes, before the Removites could lay hands on him.

They plunged into the shrubbery after him, but when they reached the other side all they saw of him was the part the goat had damaged disappearing over the fence into the Merivale wood. And to pursue him there, at night-time, was, they knew, utterly useless.



THAT GUNMAN GOT HIS GOAT!—Johnny and his chums leapt forward. Suddenly something burst from the bushes, rocketing straight for the man, hitting him in the moment that he pulled the trigger.

"Well, chaps, we've lost the beggar!" said Johnny breathlessly. "I expect Captain Monteith will be out investigating the row, so we'll get back. Gosh, the blighter nearly prevented the Captain from attending our Gladiator's show to-morrow!"

"Yes, we must have our famous archæologist at St. Giddy's to-morrow," agreed Tony Graham. "The games wouldn't go down properly without the Emperor on his dais."

They made their way back to the house, to explain to the startled Captain and his servants the cause of all the shouting.

But they would not have been so cheerful had they seen the form that crouched down behind the other side of the fence. The fugitive had doubled back from the wood—and now every word the juniors said came clearly to his ears.

His lips curved back in a hate-filled snarl. "To-morrow . . . at ze school! *Sapristi!* Dees tam I no fail . . ."

JOHNNY and his chums, meanwhile, had told the astonished Captain all that had transpired in his garden. The famous archæologist was frankly puzzled.

"You say the fellow looked like an Italian?" he asked. "No, I never knew I had any enemies. As you know, I have but recently returned from an archæological expedition to Rome, whence I brought back many articles of great historic value. I may have made enemies—but it seems more likely that the fellow mistook me for someone else."

"That's probably it, sir," agreed Johnny. "But I should keep a lookout for him, in case he's still labouring under the same mistake! And now, sir, if you wouldn't mind 'phoning to the Head while we go home, explaining why we're late . . .?"

"Yes, yes, certainly, my lads!" returned the Mayor. "You hurry off. Oh, there's the goat that saved my life, with your help. Probably your shouts enraged it."

The old billy-goat, a great hairy animal that seemed to have weathered many a winter, came nuzzling up to them. It was apparently quite tame now. Johnny caught hold of one of its huge horns, and the goat playfully butted at him.

"Huge brute, isn't he?" he said. "Almost a rhinoceros! Look at the beard on him! . . . Ow! Warrer you at, you ass?"

Johnny broke off with a yell as Dick Bannister's mighty fist connected with his shoulder-blades.

"The very idea, chaps!" Dick yelled. "Something's just struck me . . ."

"It struck me too!" grinned Johnny ruefully, trying to rub his shoulders.

"Why not use this goat in the Arena to-morrow—sort of Christians thrown to the woolly rhinoceros, and so on . . .?"

Lord Reggie Pelham-Smith, the schoolboy lordling, regarded Dick through his monocle in mock awe.

"Begad, old chappies! Dickie's got a brain, too!" he exclaimed.

"So he has, Reggie; it isn't only the blue-blooded aristocrats that have 'em, you know," grinned Johnny. "That's a grand idea, Dick. There's only one thing—whose is the goat?"

"Begad, I hadn't thought of that," remarked Reggie in distressed tones. He turned to the Mayor. "Do you know whose jolly old goat it is, sir?"

"No, I'm afraid I don't!" replied Captain Monteith. "It doesn't belong to any of the farmers hereabouts. It must be a stray, from some distance—so I think, in the circumstances, that I can give you charge of it till it is claimed. As chief magistrate, I can give you that right."

The Roman Rascal's Ruse.

"**G**RROOOOOGH! I say, you—yah!—chaps, this is too—yaroogh!—tight!"

Fatty Slocum, the fat boy of the Remove at St. Giddy's protested feebly as the merry Co. forced him into the confined space of the Roman Gladiator's dress. All the rest of them were already encased in breast-plates, helmets, togas, etc., and a fine show they made as they trotted about the quad this sunny Saturday afternoon.

"Come on, Fatty; relax that waist-line a bit! Breathe out! Ready? Now, all together, fellows—heave!"

The fellows heaved at the word, and by dint of much puffing and perspiration the armour was made to meet round Fatty's waist. And, as they stood back

and surveyed their handiwork, Johnny and his chums lifted up their voices and they smiled loud and long.

Dick Bannister, meanwhile, was attending to another part of the show—the *piece de resistance*! They were going to give a show of chariot racing. They had built some natty, light chariots, with the help of some motor wheels and soap-boxes, and these were to be drawn by the three motor-bikes they had brought home with them from Switzerland. With the help of Timothy Catchpole, the scientific genius of the Remove, they had rigged up remote control to the throttles, clutches, and gears, and the “reins” were connected to the handlebars.

They had tried out the machines this morning, and found them, in the words of the scriptures, to be good. A sort of “ground level” seat had been rigged up for the Mayor, with the help of Sergeant Rumble, an armchair, and a few planks. The rest of the visitors and parents of the numerous fellows would have to view the events from the windows of the studies, which gave on to three sides of the quad.

When all was ready, the show was started with a “March of the Prætorian Guards.” A dozen of the Removites marched round the quad, and gave a short exhibition of Swedish drill, etc. This was in deference to the Head, who had insisted on the display containing something of their school curriculum!

After that, they came to the “real” part of the display. Dick Bannister led into the arena the “wild woolly rhinceeros,” in the person of old Nebuchad

captain with an angry bleat. Johnny avoided those prodding horns by a wild and undignified leap over the wooden wall of the arena.

“Golly, golly, massa Johnny,” laughed Snowball, the little darkie Removite. “Dat goat don’ want yo’ to tell no tales ’bout ’im!”

“Ha, ha! He believes dead men keep mum. Snowball! But watch old Dickie deal with the blighter.”

Amid the acclamation of the multitude, Dicus Bannisto, armed with a short (rubber) sword and a large blanket painted with criss-cross black lines, to represent the gladiators’ net, stepped into the arena. And Nebby stood not upon the order of his going, but went for him!

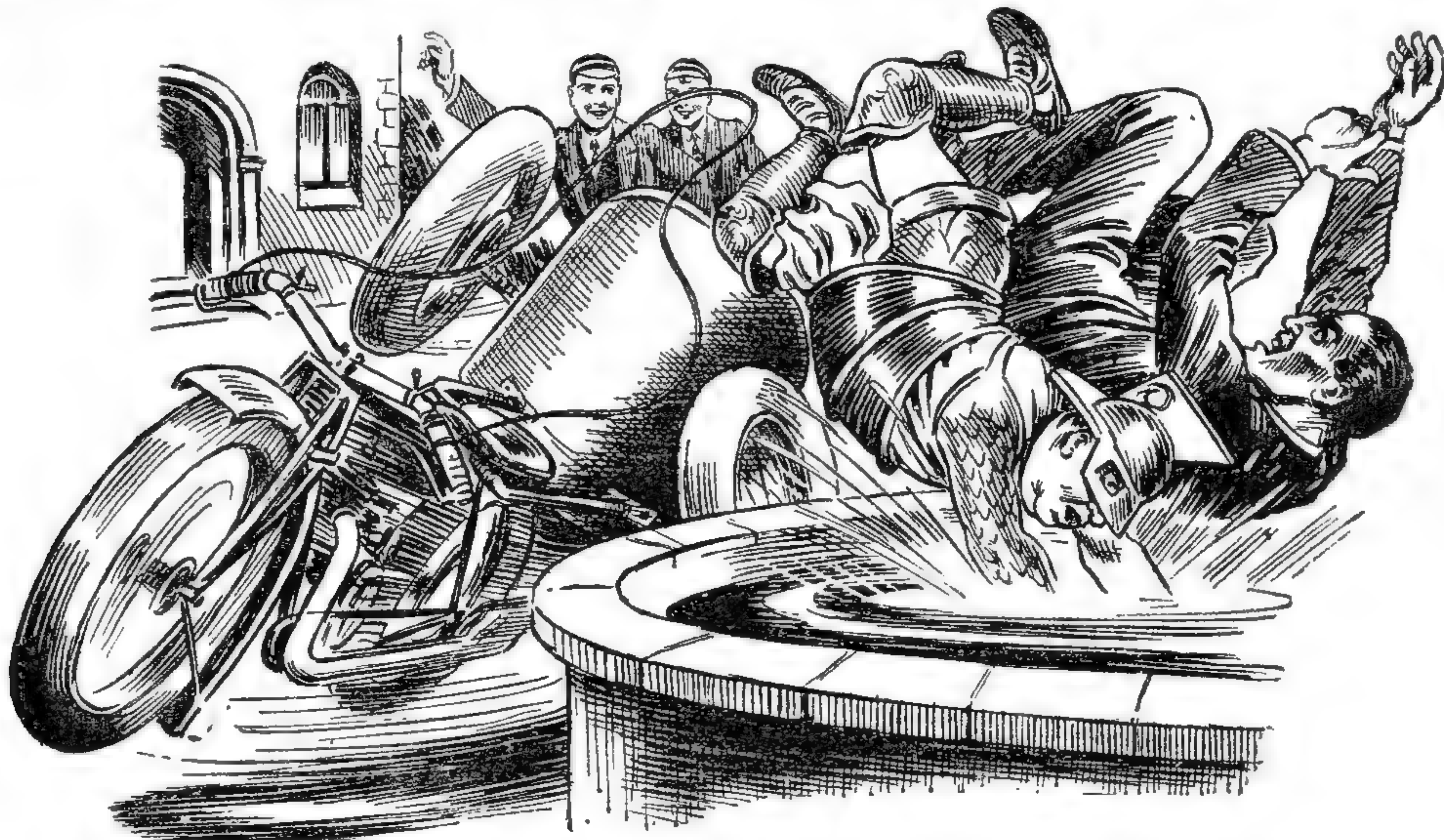
But Dick was ready for him. Many a time and oft he had dealt in similar fashion with old Jeremiah, Farmer Starling’s goat. He waved the blanket in front of Neb’s face, dodging the charge behind it, and as the ireful animal stamped by, tapped it playfully with his sword.

Cheers went up from the “citizens.” It looked easy enough, but there was a certain amount of personal danger in it for the daring “Gladiator.” For the horns of an angry billy-goat have no mean b.h.p. behind them!

“Go it, Dickie!” Johnny shouted. “Stap him in the gizzards, man!”

“Yo, yo, yo! Try an’ singe de ol’ goat’s beard!” laughed Snowball.

It certainly was an excellent display. Dick dealt



THE SPEEDSTERS SPLASH.—Fatty gave a yell as a hand clutched his ankle. He looked down to see that there was a man under the sack on the floor of his chariot—and then the two of them gave loud howls as the chariot hit the coping of the fountain, throwing the charioteers into the clinging wetness.

nezzar, their goat, and Johnny took up his stance to announce the event.

“Friends, Romans, Countrymen!” he shouted, through a megaphone that looked strangely incongruous in the hands of a Gladiator. “The most famous of Gladiators, Dicus Bannisto, will now defy single-handed the dangerous Woolly Rhinoceros! I may add that this animal is . . . Ow! Look out!”

Probably it was Johnny’s megaphone that annoyed “Nebby.” Anyway he charged at the Remove

with that goat with practised ease, dodging its battering-ram charges and at the same time diverting it from rushing the fence to the great detriment of the Emperor, alias Mayor Monteith! Johnny and his chums watched in admiration.

Suddenly, Snowball gripped Johnny’s arm. “Golly, golly, Massa Johnny,” he exclaimed. “Look ober dere! Eben dose corsets haben’t stopped Massa Slocum from stoking!”

Johnny followed the little nigger’s pointing finger,

and he gasped. For there, sneaking along towards the woodshed, was a fat round figure in the helmet and armour of a gladiator, and his plump bare arms were filled with paper bags.

Johnny gave a yell of rage when he saw that the bags were those in which he and his chums had brought a supply of tuck only that morning.

"Hi! Come back, Fatty! After the rotter—he's got our tuck!"

Fatty was a good fifty yards ahead of them—and a determined grub-cadger can do a lot in the eight seconds they took to cover it. He dashed into the woodshed, where the three chariots were housed, and then Johnny almost wanted to stop running and kick himself for teaching Fatty to drive one of them. For a bellowing roar of a motor-cycle engine came to their ears from within the shed. Fatty had started up one of them, and was making a getaway!

The human mountain of the Remove had, indeed, had everything prepared. He had anticipated a chase, and now he had only to leap on to the chariot and drive out.

But Fatty was not the only one who had made plans, sinister plans, for this afternoon! As he ran into the shed, a figure that had been skulking there dived under a sack on the floor of the nearest chariot. And it was on to this chariot that Fatty now leapt!

The man gave a gasp as the weight of Fatty's great feet descended on him. Before he could recover his breath, Fatty had let in the clutch and steered the lurching machine out of the shed, scattering Johnny and his chums as they reached the door.

"Hi! Come here, you rotter, Fatty!" yelled Johnny.

But Fatty merely chuckled, and changed the gear up to second, opening the throttle wide—and then he gave a yell of fright as the floor under him moved convulsively, and a hand grabbed his ankle.

"*Sapristi!* Fool—you have ruined all! *Ouch! Gerroff!*"

Fatty looked down into a pair of black, flashing eyes, set in a swarthy face that had appeared from under the sack.

"Leggo my ankle!" he screeched. "Gerroff my chariot! *Ooooww!*"

The human "floor" lurched again in an effort to disengage itself from Fatty's weight—and Fatty promptly sat down on the man's face with a bump. Meanwhile, the engine of the powerful if ramshackle mo'-bike had been accelerating in second gear with all the energy of five hungry horses, and by now was going across the middle of the quad at nearly twenty m.p.h. Johnny Gee & Co. were chasing behind, yelling to Fatty to pick up the reins again and steer the thing before . . .

Crash! "*Yow! Gurrooogh! Woupp!*" *Splash!* The big fountain, with the pond that surrounded it, was the end of the chase. There was a loud crash as the bike struck the parapet a glancing blow. The whole machine swung round, till the chariot hit the low parapet side on. Fatty and his unwilling passenger gave loud yells of consternation as they sailed through the air, to fall with twin splashes into the clinging wetness of the pond.

Johnny and his chums rushed up to the side of the pond. They dragged Fatty forth, and then the other. The latter fought fiercely to escape, but the Removites held him, and Johnny gave a shout of surprise as the man shook the wet, clammy hair from across his face.

"Why, it's the rotter we saw last night, shooting at the Captain! Come on, bring him along!"

The gladiatorial show had been temporarily abandoned during this contretemps, and boys were rushing up from all sides. Nebby had been got under control, and Hooper was holding him securely.

Johnny and his chums made their way through the crowd to where the Head was standing with Captain Monteith.

"This rotter—ahem—was skulking about in the woodshed, sir," he explained. "And it's the same fellow who tried to shoot you up at your house last night!"

"What?" The Mayor looked at the prisoner, who was snarling his rage in a foreign tongue while the juniors held him in their grip. "Is this true? What are you doing here?"

"I come to keel you, Captain Monteith!" snarled the man. "I swear I keel you—I, Guiseppe della Napolo!"

"But what's your game, man?" exclaimed the great archaeologist. "I've done you no harm."

"You do no 'arm? Ha, ha!" The Italian was working himself into a terrific state of rage. "You come to my country, you dig up the earth, and you tak' away what you call ze treasures of history, no? Well, you 'ave violate ze lost tomb of my ancestors, and for zat I swear I keel you!"

"Bah! Nonsense!" Captain Monteith spoke with contempt. "Five hundred years ago your idea of a feud might have been accepted—but to-day, it is ridiculous. My excavations are of great value to the world. These brave boys shall hand you over to the police as an undesirable alien . . ."

"That's the stuff, sir," chuckled Johnny Gee. "We'll lock him up till the show's over, and we can 'phone for P.C. Dooley to come and take him away. Guard, Shun! March to the box-room, and hold the prisoner, Centurion Graham, you will stand guard at the door till you are relieved. *Veni, vidi, vici!*"

The grinning guard squad marched the prisoner away, to bind him and lock him in the box-room. Tony Graham, as his leader had directed, stood guard at the door, while the rest returned to the arena to witness the last part of the show.

It was some minutes before this could be proceeded with. First they found it necessary to chase Fatty Slocum once more. Notwithstanding his preliminary set-back, Fatty, finding that no one was very interested in him when he came out of the pond, had gathered up the remains of the tuck, and wet as he was, made off with it to the cloisters. When routed out at last, most of the tuck was gone.

Then the wreckage of the first motor-bike and chariot had to be cleared away. But after about a quarter of an hour, all was in readiness for the great Chariot Race.

The arena had been cleared. Neb was safe in the charge of Hooper of the Remove, down by the Mayor's podium; after his hectic battle with Dick Bannister, Neb was quite docile.

The two remaining chariots were run in front of the woodshed, facing the quad. An admiring crowd of boys stood round, many of them in the gladiator uniforms.

"Well, all O.K.?" asked Johnny, as he mounted his chariot.

"O.K. Chief—er—I mean *bonus, centurio!*" laughed Dick from the other. "I think we'd better take a passenger each, though, to help hold the weight down on the corners."

"Good idea. You come with me, Snowball, and Reggie can go with Dick. Now, start up the engines."

The engines were started up, and the passengers mounted on the little chariots behind their leaders. The spectators round the quad craned forward, while the starter, Sergeant Rumble, raised his flag.

"Get ready . . ."

The engines roared as throttles were opened in readiness for the "Go!" Even as the flag began to fall, and the two chariots moved off, a figure dressed,

(Continued on page 30.)

SAY? MEET MONTY and SAM! The Jazzy Joystick Juggler and the Comical News-film Camera Man. Up Against the Black Emperor. GRIPPING COMPLETE SURPRISE TALE.



A Black Napoleon's Gigantic Scheme to Rule the Earth—

—Foiled By Two Dare-devil English Go-getters!

Sam Jumps To It.

"**W**AIT till I say go," said Monty Ruggles, "then jump. And mind you count ten before you pull the rip-cord so as to give the shroud lines a chance to clear the 'plane.'" "Righto!" said Sam Jagers. "All I hope is I don't stutter when I start counting."

In spite of this attempt to be jocular his heart was thumping wildly, for it wanted some nerve to leap from a 'plane three thousand feet up with nothing between one and death but a few square yards of silk. Below, the earth was a pit of darkness, with a haze of lights away to the south-east.

"Go!" exclaimed Monty, and held the joystick steady.

Sam jumped, and experienced a sickening sensation in the pit of his stomach. But after a moment this nausea vanished and he could hardly believe he was falling any longer. Then he jerked the rip-cord.

For what seemed an age nothing happened; then the parachute opened with a jerk. After that he was floating down gently and the lights were growing in size and brilliance, for the wind was drifting him steadily towards them.

"Oh, dash!" he grumbled. "Looks as if I'm gonna drop in on the Black Emperor at this rate. I oughta made allowance for the wind."

Samuel Jagers had been guilty of some audacious tricks during his career as a news-film man. But his maddest stunt he had ever tried was sanity compared with his present escapade, for he was out to make a film of the headquarters of the Black Emperor.

Like a black shadow the dread of the Emperor lay across England. He was at the head of an organisation which existed for the purpose of forming a great coloured empire with himself as absolute ruler. His fleet of monoplanes, flying at the terrific speed of 250 miles an hour had wiped out Paris, and attempted to do the same with London. Sam and Monty, however, had frustrated him, and the Emperor had withdrawn to his base in Africa. Sam Jagers and Monty Ruggles had followed him there in order to get a film of it, because Sam argued that the film would be of tremendous value to the British air chiefs, and would also be the biggest scoop that any news-film man had ever got.



Sam meant to creep close to the camp, wait until daybreak and make his "shots"; after which Monty was to pick him up a few miles away at the junction of a river with the big lake on the shores of which the Black Emperor had his base.

Sam thought of all this as he dropped earthwards. "Oh, boy!" he told himself gloomily. "It'd sure be the cat's pyjamas of a stunt if it wasn't for the blessed wind. But if you flop in on his ebony

majesty, I guess the next thing you'll be doing will be shaking hands with the angels."

He watched the lights anxiously, and presently tried the effect of pulling down on the ropes on one side. This made the 'chute tilt over and drop at a sharper angle, and he heaved a sigh of relief as he saw that he would now land clear of the big flood lights that illuminated the beach which the Black Emperor's vessels used as a landing-ground. At the same time it made him fall more swiftly, and he struck the ground with a terrific jolt that made him believe he had broken both legs.

He found that he had landed on a patch of sundried scrub close to which was a jungle of elephant grass. Grabbing his camera and tripod he bolted for it, and blundered through the grass till he found himself on the edge of the lake.

Farther down the lake he could see the mass of iron buildings that served as hangars for the Black Emperor's air fleet, and the smaller huts that housed his mechanics. The whole place stood out vividly in the unearthly glare of the powerful flood lights; while beyond, the jungle was like a back-cloth of dark velvet.

Sam spent some eerie hours in his hiding-place among the elephant grass. Once he heard the shrill unearthly yell of a leopard, and monkeys chattered as they fled through the treetops.

Sam liked these animals in the Zoo, but he had no desire to have a first-hand acquaintance with them, and he was glad when, beyond the oily waters of the lake, the horizon grew rosy-pink with the dawn.

Sam crept to the edge of the jungle of elephant grass and squinted at the Black Emperor's base. He was on a slight eminence from which he could command a view of the whole place, and he beamed with satisfaction as he started to grind away at the handle of his camera.

"I'll tell the pop-eyed world you've got the goods this time, Sam o' mine," he mumbled.

He got some shots of 'planes landing and going and the general bustling life of the camp. Then, making a wide detour, he came out to the shore of the lake on the other side of the Black Emperor's base. Here he saw three enormous metal cylinders that looked like gas-holders. Sam was puzzled to know what they were and decided to get closer to film them.

So intent was he on his task he never heard a crackling among the undergrowth behind him. When at last he looked round he saw a score of negroes, clad in tunics and breeches of field-grey, and armed with rifles, coming for him in a semi-circle. Sam jumped up with a gasp of dismay, swung up his tripod like a club, and ran at the nearest man.

Crack! The tripod smashed down on the fellow's bare skull and with a yelp of pain he stumbled and fell.

"Come on, the lot of you!" Sam yelled.

It was really a quite unnecessary invitation, for his enemies showed no signs of holding back. They made a rush. Sam swiped out once more with his tripod, then he was swept off his feet and half-a-dozen pairs of hands grabbed him. Helpless in their grip, he was picked up and carried at a trot out into the open towards a big hut in front of which a black flag flapped lazily in the breeze.

In The Emperor's Presence.

SAM was bundled inside the hut and dragged in front of the huge throne carved in ebony and decorated with ivory upon which the Emperor was seated. As when Sam had seen him before, he wore nothing but a leopard skin, and his features were completely hidden by a wooden mask carved and painted into a most diabolic expression of ferocity.

Sam's captors shoved him forward and the Black Emperor spoke: "You are the camera-man who once stole an aeroplane from me?"

The cultured voice was utterly unemotional.

Sam dusted the mud from the knees of his loud check suit.

"You said it, buddy," he remarked coolly.

"You will die for that," the Emperor said grimly. "And hereafter men shall speak of the manner of your death in whispers."

Sam showed nothing of the growing horror which he felt.

"Aw! Can it, big boy," he said. "That kind of stuff may get 'em in a melodrama, but it doesn't cut any ice with me."

"*Ou!*" The Emperor uttered a sharp guttural growl and his great hands clenched on the ivory arms of his stool till the muscles stood out in knots. He made a tremendous effort to control himself.

"You also betrayed my plans for an attack on London," he said.

"I sure spilt the beans," Sam said complacently.

"I tell you what," he went on, waving a bony forefinger at the Emperor. "If I'm due to be bumped off, there's no insurance company would care to take out a policy on your life, old cock. I expect they'll hang you when you're nabbed. *That's* not a very romantic death."

The Emperor trembled with suppressed rage. Presently he said in a voice that shook with passion: "You shall not have the satisfaction before you die of believing that you have ruined my plans. I am to lay your London waste with another of my inventions—a big bombing 'plane that needs no crew and is directed by me from here by means of wireless control. Your 'planes may try to shoot it down, and your anti-aircraft guns bombard it, but they will

have no effect, for it is strongly armoured. What do you think of that?"

"You want my frank opinion?" Sam asked calmly, as though he were discussing the merits of chewing-gum with a friend. "Well, I don't mind telling you I think it's all poppycock."

"You shall see for yourself," the Black Emperor snarled. "And then you shall die."

He rapped out some orders in a tongue that was gibberish to Sam, and several of the guards seized the youngster and hustled him out of the hut. The Black Emperor followed and strode across the beach towards the three huge cylinders.

He pointed to them in passing.

"There is my petrol supply," he said in a mocking voice. "What a pity you will never live to tell your white government of that, so they might destroy it with bombs from the air and cripple my fleets."

Beyond the metal cylinders they came to a huge hangar, close to which was a small tower of concrete with a metal domed roof.

"My wireless control station," the Black Emperor said. "Watch, and you shall see the monster that is to destroy London."

He strode up a short flight of steps and vanished into the building. Presently a crackle of bluish light played about the triple masts that rose from the centre of the domed roof. Almost at once metal doors opened in the hangar, and an enormous cigar-shaped vessel glided out. It was propelled by twin screws and supported by long fin-shaped planes on either side and two helicopters above. Between these helicopters was a small railed-in platform.

Again there was a crackle of electricity from the tower, and the bomber came gently to rest close to where Sam and his guards stood. The Black Emperor reappeared in the doorway of the control tower.

"It will attack at night," he said, "and fly at an enormous height out of range of anti-aircraft guns. The machine-guns which your fighting 'planes carry would still be useless against its armour-plating, could they climb to the altitude at which it flies. There will be no way of stopping it except by destroying my wireless control station here. It carries fifty tons of high explosives and poison gas bombs, and when it is over central London, it will drop like an aerial torpedo and destroy every building within three or four miles."

Sam was so horrified at the prospect which the Emperor envisaged that for once even his ready tongue failed him.

The Black Emperor pointed to the little platform at the top of the bomber.

"During my tests with this machine," he said coldly, "observers have travelled on that platform. I intend now that you should take their place."

"Hey?" Sam gasped in a startled voice.

"You will be sent into the air with fifty tons of explosives beneath you," the Emperor said with a sudden display of ferocity. "You will travel to London with the vessel, and you will be destroyed when the ship crashes."

He spoke rapidly in the native tongue, and Sam's guards dragged him up to the side of the gigantic bomber. Prodding him viciously with their bayonets, they forced him to mount a narrow iron ladder to the platform at the top. Meanwhile, the Black Emperor went back into the control tower, and as soon as Sam was on the platform, the triple masts spluttered with electricity again, and the bomber rose into the air.

The earth slipped away at a dizzy pace that made Sam cling to the narrow rail and gasp for breath.

Turning The Tables.

SAM gave himself up for lost and stared with haggard eyes at the country below.

Suddenly he was roused from his stupor by the sight of a monstrous 'plane swooping down at him out of the filmy clouds. A cracked cheer came from his lips as he recognised his chum in the cockpit. Flying at an enormous altitude that made him practically invisible to the men below, Monty Ruggles had been scanning the base through powerful binoculars, anxious to know how Sam's expedition had fared. He had seen the pseudo Yankee's plight, though, of course, he did not know how desperate it was. Now he was coming down to investigate.

As he swooped alongside, Sam cupped his hands and yelled: "You gotta get me off this blessed thing! It's wireless controlled and jammed tight with explosives due to go off when it reaches London."

"I'll fly in close as I can. You'll have to jump for it," Monty shouted.

A rather white-faced Sam nodded and, climbing over the railing, clung to it and watched the monoplane. The bomber began to ascend almost as though the Black Emperor had seen Monty and guessed his intention.

But the young airman kept pace with it. Round and round the bomber he flew in a spiral that got gradually closer. Sam watched with anxious eye muscles tensed for the leap that he knew might easily end in his death.

Closer and closer Monty nosed in. Then Sam Jaggers saw him beckon with his left hand. The next moment, the 'plane glided in so close it seemed that one wing rasped against the side of the bomber. Sam launched himself at the monoplane. He fell asprawl the wing, and the shock was so terrific he thought he must have broken several ribs. He was dazed and breathless, and would have slipped off again if his chum had not reached over and grabbed him by one arm.

The monoplane began to roll over, for Monty was too busy hauling Sam into safety to bother about the controls. At last a breathless, exhausted Sam Jaggers was pulled to the edge of the cockpit, and Monty turned his attention to the 'plane again. It was not too soon, for the ship was threatening to go into a side-spin. With straining muscles he used rudder-bar and joystick to bring it back to an even keel.

When at last he regained control of the vessel and lifted her nose to rise, a black shadow loomed above him, and he only just managed to roll clear as the bomber dived for them. He tried to fly clear, but the huge vessel came after them with a speed slightly greater than their own. It was plain that the Black Emperor had seen what had happened, and was intent upon destroying Monty's 'plane.

The youngster realised that if the monstrous vessel collided with them it would smash them hopelessly, and for the next few minutes he flew as he had never done before, using all his skill to avoid the other vessel. He climbed and nose-dived and looped, and used every device to escape from the thing. But all the while it drove him relentlessly back towards the Emperor's base.

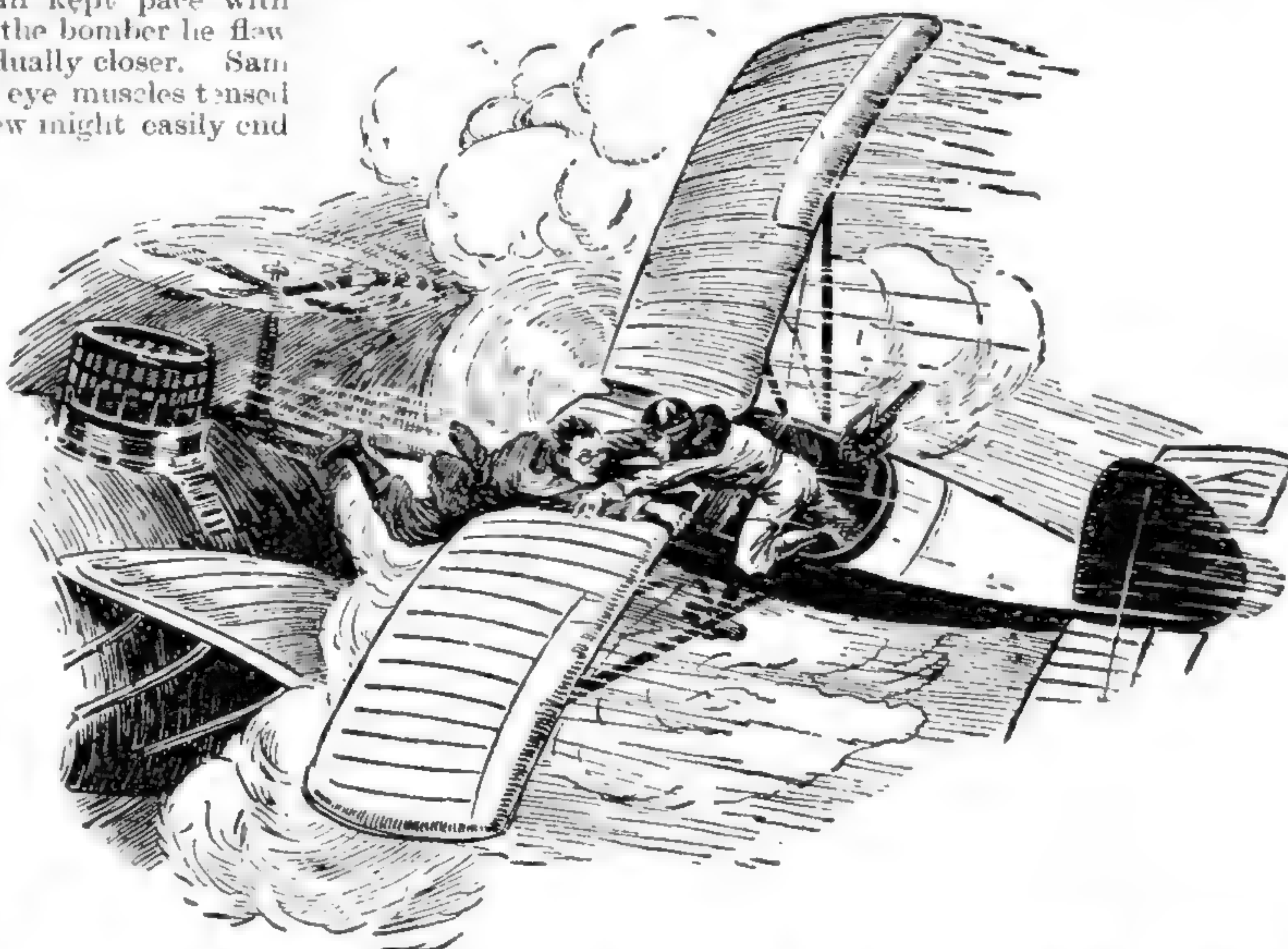
He swooped earthwards in a power-dive, hoping to escape that way. But the bomber did the same, and her superior weight gave her a greater speed in such a manoeuvre, and Monty levelled out sharply to avoid being overtaken.

Pulling back on the 'stick, he lifted the monoplane so suddenly that she seemed to hang by her propeller in the sky. Then she curved backwards in a wide loop and just avoided a collision. Monty kicked right-side up and saw with dismay that the pursuer was still above them.

Tat-tat-tat-tat-tat! He opened fire with his machine-gun, but without effect. Then he became aware that Sam was screaming in his ear.

"That tower down there! That controls it! The only way to smash it is to destroy that tower!" Sam was yelling.

Monty's mind acted swiftly. He went all out



THE DANGER DIVE.—The plane glided in, and Sam launched himself into the air. He fell asprawl on a wing, and would have slid off had not his chum reached over and grabbed him.

towards the Black Emperor's base with the huge bomber hurtling after them in a grim race in which it gradually overhauled them. Monty stared down at the tower, and his fingers closed on the lever that released one of the two bombs he had mounted before leaving for Africa.

He let it go. Minutes seemed to pass; then suddenly a blaze of saffron-coloured flames leapt up, and they heard a thunderous *boooooom!* They saw the three huge petrol tanks go over as though they were tin cans kicked by a giant's foot, and a sea of flaming, smoking petrol pour across the ground. Little ant-like figures raced away in all directions.

But the wireless tower was still intact, and the
(Continued on page 28.)

INTRODUCING HAPPY!

He Prefers to Sleep, but When he Wakes Up—Phew! Happy's a Human Whirlwind! In This Terrific Tale of His Amusing Exploits He Quells a Revolution Single-handed, Becomes President of a Country—and Then Goes to Sleep Again! Read This Rollicking Long Complete Fun Tale and Roar!

Shanghaied from 'Frisco.

HAPPY MULDOON sat on the 'Frisco waterfront, with his back against a bollard, fast asleep. It was his favourite attitude, and he interfered with nobody, and nobody interfered with him. However, for once he was the object of interest to two men. One was a husky-looking bloke with the battered uniform of a merchant skipper, and he nodded in Happy's direction.

"I want that guy," he said.

The other shook his head promptly.

"Cap'n Mills," he said, "you *don't* want that guy. Happy Muldoon just sits around and sleeps, and sometimes he just sleeps."

Cap'n "Butcher" Mills, of the *Jane Anderson*, snorted, and then he crossed over and surveyed Happy Muldoon closely. His eyes took in the hefty frame, the powerful arms, and the mighty shoulders, and he nodded again.

"I tell you I want this guy, Twisty," he said firmly. "He won't be the first lazy hobo that I've knocked into shape. Rap him over the head and shove him aboard inside an hour, and it's six dollars for you. I'm sick to death of paying you five dollars a head for shanghai-in' pint-size rats. I want this hobo!"

So that was how Happy Muldoon, who never worked, came to be socked over the head and bundled aboard the shady little tramp-steamer, *Jane Anderson*, bound for South America and points unknown. "Butcher" Mills and his packet had a bad name, and he was used to buying his men on the hoof, as the saying is, for self-respecting sailors wouldn't sign on with him.

They were three days out of 'Frisco, and Happy Muldoon still lay in the smelly fore-castle sleeping like a log. Meanwhile, "Butcher" Mills and his hard-driving mates had driven the rest of the cowed crew on deck.

"Where's that darn 'Frisco scum?" bellowed Cap'n Mills. "Drive that lazy stiff on deck!"

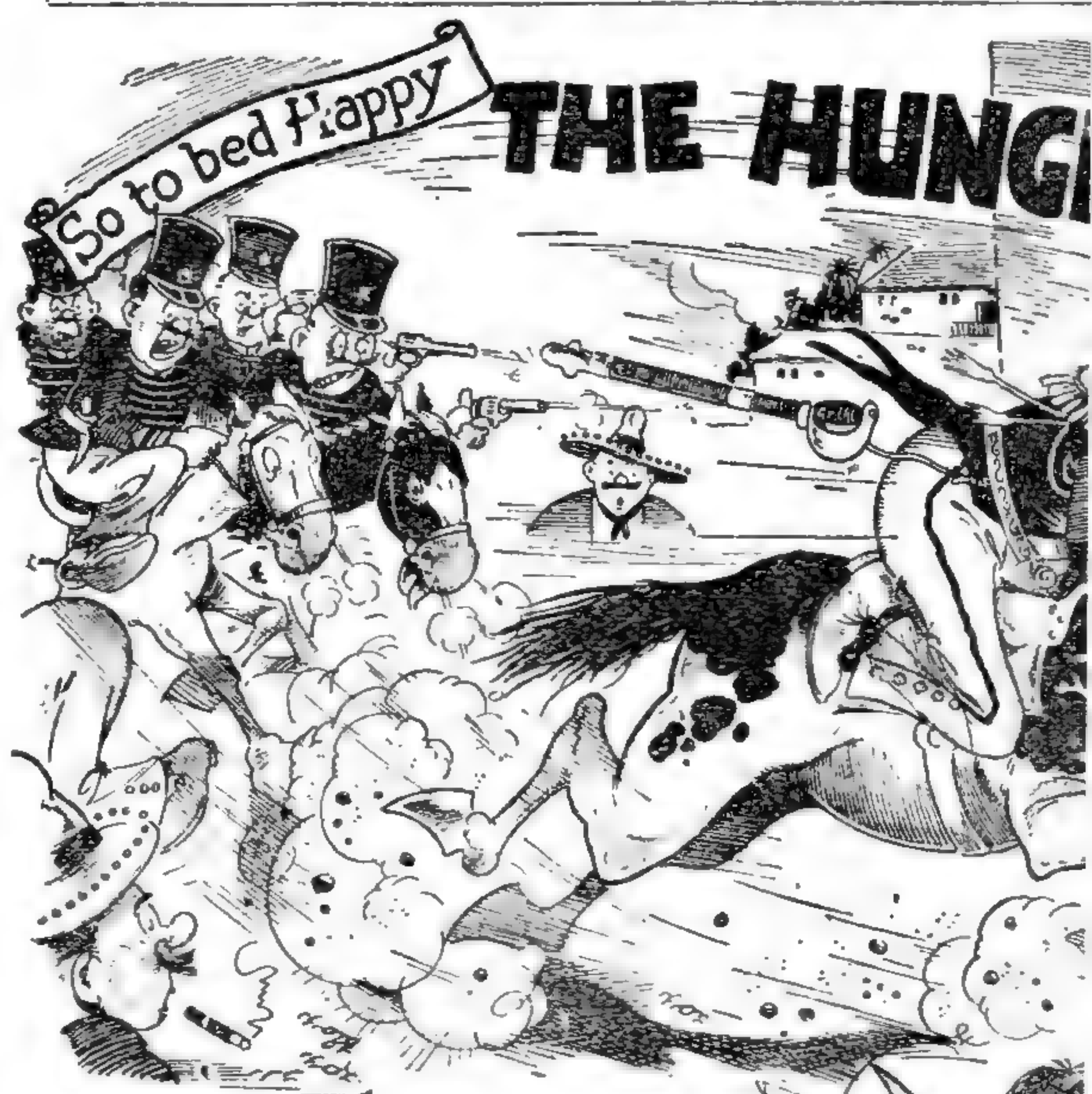
Mike Coats, second mate, had been puzzled what to do with the big red-headed bloke asleep in the fore-castle.

"Darned if I can rouse him up, Cap'n!" he said. "Seems to me that feller's liable to stay unconscious for a week. You don't s'pose Twisty's socked him a bit too hard?"

"Butcher" Mills snarled. "You durn fool, he's foxing on you! Guess I'll soon hustle him on deck if I go below! Follow me, you wet streak, and I'll show you how I handle guys like that!"

He strode towards the fore-castle, and clattered down the companion. Happy Muldoon was sprawling on his bunk.

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Muldoon looked a fine figure of a man, clad only in his shirt and trousers and broken boots. He was as big as "Butcher," although his expression was a lot pleasanter. "Butcher" had picked up a belaying-pin on his way across the deck.

"Out of that, you skulking hobo!" he snarled. He dragged Happy from the bunk to the floor, and then he kicked him in the ribs with his heavy sea-boot. Happy blinked and opened his eyes, and then regarded "Butcher" Mills doubtfully.

"Eh?" he said.

"Up on deck, and step lively, before I open your skull!" ordered Cap'n Mills. "You got to work to eat aboard this packet!"

He kicked again viciously, and Happy Muldoon rolled clear and rose slowly to his feet. His eyes took in the dirty fore-castle, the skipper and his mate, and a scared cook peering out of his galley.

"Shanghaied, by heck!" he exclaimed. "Are you the guy that had me fixed?"

"Sure!" Cap'n Mills said sneeringly. "I'm skipper of this packet, and what I say goes. Now step out and step lively!"

Happy Muldoon had seemed dazed and half awake, but he moved with amazing quickness. Quite suddenly he rushed the skipper, who raised his belaying pin to defend himself. He struck viciously for the red head, but Happy's right arm sent the weapon flying across the fore-castle. The hobo gripped the skipper in a bear-like hug and placed him on his back.

"Darned if you'll kick me again!" he said. He gripped the skipper's lashing legs and yanked his big sea-boots off. He tossed these up the open companion, clean over the rail into the sea. Then he



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stepped back calmly and let the skipper bound to his feet.

Cap'n Mills was livid with rage. He rushed at Happy Muldoon with waving fists, intent on battering him down. Happy side-stepped, measured for the skipper's jaw, and planted his big fist there. Cap'n Mills staggered back against the companion.

"You—you saw that, Mr. Coates? That's mutiny, that is! We'll put this skunk in irons!"

"Sure, Mr. Mills!" Coates answered nervously. "I'll—I'll get help!"

He turned and dashed up the companion, and Cap'n Mills hastily followed him. Happy Muldoon turned to the cook with a genial smile.

"Say, bo, when do we eat aboard this packet? Me stomach thinks me throat's cut!"

The cook regarded him fearfully. "There ain't nothing in the galley," he said anxiously. "The hands cleaned up at breakfast, and I ain't put the stew on for dinner yet."

Muldoon lounged across to the galley and inspected the black top of the stove. Then he opened its door. Potatoes were boiling, and a pan of beans and a hefty roast of beef was cooking.

"That's for the ship's officers," the cook explained fearfully. "I got to take that to the cabin in a minute for Cap'n Mills and the mates!"

"You have?" said Happy. "Well, there's a little walk I'll save you."

He hoisted the roast out of the oven, tipped the pan of potatoes and the beans over it, and proceeded to devour the meal intended for the three officers. Meanwhile, he grinned at the cook and assured him it was the best meal he had had for weeks.

"A guy who can cook like you ought to be at the Savoley Hotel!" he said.

The cook was scared stiff. Once Cap'n Mills had split his head open because his dinner was five minutes late. What would he say now it had gone altogether? The cook backed from the galley, scuttled up the forecastle companion, and hurried aft. He found Cap'n "Butcher" Mills and his two mates in his cabin.

"That red-headed deck-hand, skipper!" he reported. "He's eaten your dinner!"

"The dirty crook!" bellowed Mills. "You hear that, Husky? We got to fix that gorilla before he sinks the ship! Load up and come for'ard with me!"

Cap'n Mills, his first mate, Husky Bruton, and his second mate made their preparations for dealing with the shanghaied deck-hand. They loaded up their revolvers and placed them in their hip-pockets, the butts protruding, and then they moved aft in a body. From all over the ship deck-hands were watching cautiously, for they had heard of the patch of trouble the skipper had run up against. And there was no doubt the sympathy of the ship's company was with the rebel.

Marooned!

THE three ship's officers clumped down to the forecastle together, and discovered Happy Muldoon sprawling on his bunk with his eyes closed. "Butcher" Mills addressed him aggressively.

"Now, you big crook, snap out of this! Up on deck and get busy!"

Happy just blinked at him and yawned, and Mills signalled to his mates to attack. The three sprang for Muldoon together, and a moment later they found themselves involved in the fight of their lives. Muldoon coiled himself up like a spring, and his knees jolted Coates under the chin. Happy grabbed the skipper and Husky Bruton by their coats and jammed their heads together, and then tossed them back across the fo'c'sle.

He sprang from his bunk just as the skipper reached for his gun, and a fist against his upper arm made the skipper drop it with a clatter. Coates crawled to the companion and fled, and when Happy advanced the other two followed in haste. They were battered and perspiring, and it made the skipper snarl to see grinning deck-hands surveying him. Husky Bruton turned on him with a snarl.

"Darn it, skip, you might as well have shipped a cargo of wild cats!"

"We got to fix him!" the skipper said hoarsely. "I've picked some tough babies, but I've tamed 'em all, and I'll tame this guy if he dies of lead poisoning! Gimme your gun!"

He knew what it meant unless the red-headed rebel knuckled under. "Butcher" Mills was known as a hazing, man-eating skipper in every Yankee port, but if it was known that one of his shanghaied victims had put it across him his name would be mud. Already the crew of the *Jane Anderson* were sniggering at him openly. He reached and took the mate's gun from him and snapped open the breech to see it was loaded.

Husky Bruton reached out and put his hand on his arm.

"Skip, it will be a bad business if you 'stiff' that guy!"

"Why?" snarled Mills. "Am I boss of this packet or am I not?"

"I tell you to put up that gun," Bruton said earnestly. "Sooner or later we got to hit port again, and there'll be an inquiry to face if you put a bullet in the red-head. Every hand aboard this packet hates you like poison, and they'll fight to give

evidence against you. They'd pitch a yarn you'd swing for if they got you in court!"

It was true, and Butcher Mills turned white at the gills. He handed back the mate's gun.

"Come in the cabin," he said. "We got to fix this lead-swinging Mick before the rest of the crew goes Bolshevik."

In the cabin they discussed it closely. Butcher Mills recognised that he had bitten off more than he could chew, and he knew if Happy Muldoon stayed aboard he would infect the rest of the crew. The cook came aft and reported that their visitor was now sprawling on deck in the sun, apparently perfectly contented.



A SOCK FOR THE SKIPPER.—The skipper rushed in with waving fists. Happy sidestepped, and measuring for the Captain's jaw, firmly planted his fist there.

"Like a durn passenger, skipper!" the cook concluded.

"There's only one thing for it, skip," the mate said. "You shanghaied that guy aboard. Well, you've got to shanghai him off!"

"What do you mean?" demanded Cap'n Mills.

Bruton jerked his thumb to port. "You got the whole coast of South America here," he said. "Mebbe there's room for that Irishman there. Cookie here could put some knock-out drops in his grub, and we could maroon him!"

"I'll do it!" said "Butcher" Mills promptly. "You got to fix the dope, cookie!"

So, an hour later, Happy, a long way from his Frisco water front, was left on the beach of that troubled little South American republic, Cacao. Cacao didn't really need Happy, for it had troubles enough of its own. There was seething discontent against the Government; the President, Ignacio Castro, slept shakily at night, and wondered whether he would manage to last the month out. Not a nice country to be dumped in at all.

Happy awoke with a bad taste in his mouth and a gnawing sense of hunger in his stomach, and he

surveyed the curving beach and the palm trees behind him with surprise.

"Darned if that crooked skipper hasn't unshanghaied me!" he reflected. "Well, I guess I'll have to hunt up something to eat!"

Before he got up, Happy turned his head to see if there were any coco nut trees about, for he didn't care about walking any further than he could help.

Presently, however, he rose and took a stroll through the forest until he struck a worn trail.

The chatter of voices came to his ears, so he planted his back against a palm tree and waited, and a moment or two later a ragged posse of about two dozen soldiers came in sight. They were bare-footed, and their uniforms included all colours of the rainbow, but they carried arms, and they ventured to approach the dozing Happy. Their lieutenant addressed Happy in Spanish, but Happy only grinned at him dreamily.

"Speak English, bo," he suggested.

"Ah, you are Americano?" the lieutenant cried. "You have passport, doubtless? What make you in Cacao?"

"Me, I've no passport," Happy said. "And I ain't come here of my own free will. I was dumped here. Now I'm looking about for a free lunch counter. Have you got any eats?"

The lieutenant took his second-in-command in whispered consultation.

"These Americanos, they are crafty," he murmured. "Doubtless this scoundrel has been running guns to the rebels, but we must not show that we suspect him. We will lead him on with smooth words."

He gave Happy a sweeping salute and addressed him in English again. "I have no doubt we can find you food, señor," he said. "Do me the honour to accompany my regiment."

"Suits me," Happy said. "But I hope we ain't got far to walk."

He strolled along amongst the ragged group of soldiery, and presently the track through the forest gave out on a plain of mesquite. They marched up to a grim-looking fortress, and Happy was carefully steered inside. The lieutenant sighed with relief to have got his big captive safely inside the gaol.

"Give him something to eat, and I will have speech with the commandant," he ordered. "No doubt he is an important prisoner."

He hurried away to the commandant of the prison.

"You have done well, Joaquin," said that worthy, when he had heard of the capture. "And I do not doubt our beloved President will commend you. We will put this villain to work in the stone-quarries!"

Happy Muldoon didn't know what plans were hatching for him. He had been disappointed in his meal, consisting of black bread and greasy stew, but when he had finished he tilted back his chair and placed his feet on the table. The Mexican guards regarded him uneasily, but it was the lieutenant's return that stirred them to action.

"He is a dangerous spy!" the lieutenant told them. "Our worthy commandant says he is to slave in the stone-quarries! Away with him!"

He marched up and addressed Happy in Spanish, and Happy listened to him drowsily. Then he waved the lieutenant aside wearily.

"Run along, big boy," he murmured. "I like a nap after I've had a meal!"

"To the quarries with him!" snapped the

lieutenant. A guard stepped forward and prodded Happy with the muzzle of a rifle. It was a mistake, for Happy sat up and glared.

"Durn it, can't you let a guy rest?" he demanded.

He gripped the muzzle of the rifle, gently detached it from its owner, and then he laid it across his knee and bent it violently. Then he reached forward and seized the pompous lieutenant by the collar, and he stretched him across the table and spanked him.

"Carramba!" shrieked the lieutenant. "Cut him in pieces!"

A shot rattled through the ceiling, and two or three of the soldiers jammed rusty bayonets in their weapons. They advanced in a ragged wave on Happy, and he biffed their leader on the nose. The guards were armed, but they couldn't use their weapons in the confined space. They got in each other's way, those at the back pushing forward, and those in front dodging Happy.

"You blinking dagos ain't got no manners!" grumbled Happy. He punched another one in the eye, jammed the headdress of another over his head, and rammed his elbow in the stomach of a third. He went through them like a sickle. He seized a rifle and banged about with the butt of it, and the ragged soldiery turned and fled.

"Darned if I'll stay here!" muttered Happy. He took a stroll down a stone-flagged corridor, which brought him to the commandant's room. The commandant was busy at his desk with his back to the door, and when he heard the door open he thought it was the lieutenant returning.

"Well, Joaquin, did you subdue the Americano?"

Happy took him by the neck and rammed his nose in his ink-pot.

"Seven thousand wild cats!" raged the commandant as Happy jerked him round. "How did you escape?" he asked in English.

"I walked out on 'em," Happy explained. "I ain't sticking around where I'm not popular. I'm going to light out of here soon as I can lay my hands on a suit of clothes. That's a mighty fine coat you're wearing, too!"

The prison commandant certainly had a resplendent uniform, and Happy's eyes sparkled enviously. The coat was all gold braid, while you couldn't see the chest for medal ribbons. There was a sword and sword-belt, too, and a helmet with plumes.

"You're wasted here in that outfit," Happy said. "Say, brother, will you lend me that kit?"

The commandant backed away hastily behind his desk. He had designed that uniform himself, and it was dearer to him than life.

"Only over my dead body!" he hissed. Happy's right hand darted across, and he hauled the commandant across the desk. He was only a little fellow, and Happy dangled him at arm's length while he borrowed his posh uniform.

"It may be a bit tight," he murmured. "But it's the dazzlingest thing I've seen, and I want to try it on. Besides, it seems to me you've got to dress like a fire-brigade to cut any ice in this country!"

The commandant, his waxed,

black moustache quivering with rage, shivered in a corner, while Happy borrowed his uniform. Happy strutted up and down the office proudly when he had buttoned himself inside it.

"Guess I'll be hitting the trail," he said gratefully. "Maybe now the natives will think I'm someone important and come across with some food!"

He strolled away, looking like a field marshal at least, and as he marched through the prison guards ducked hurriedly out of sight. There was a slight hitch at the gates, which he found locked, but he hauled the gatekeeper down his lodge chimney by one leg and made him disgorge the keys. He locked the gaol up again carefully after and dropped the keys in his pocket.

"Now for dear old 'Frisco!" Happy murmured. "But it seems to me it will be quite a walk!"

Happy Presides.

POLITICAL affairs in Cacaolo were at a crisis when Happy started wandering about the country. Miguel Del Forte, the bandit and outlaw, had gathered an army together and was reported to be marching on the capital, where the president, Ignacio Castro, had gathered the regular army about him and prepared for defence. Spies brought him reports of Del Forte's advance, and he hastily prepared the city of Miguella for a siege. Burro trains were hauling provisions into the capital, and one of these Happy encountered as he emerged from the forest on to the road.

Happy regarded the loaded line of burros with interest.

"I wonder if these guys have anything to eat aboard?" he speculated. He was above the road, sheltered by thick foliage, and as the head of the line came level Happy stepped out with a cheerful grin.



INK-ONVENIENCING THE COMMANDANT.—The Commandant was busy at his

desk with his back to the door. Happy took him by the neck and rammed his nose into the ink-pot.

"Howdy, folks! Got any eatables aboard them donkeys of yours?"

El Capitan Blanco hastily thrust his hands skyward when he saw Happy's impressive uniform. He made sure that this was a general at least, and he guessed that about two thousand rebels were concealed in the forest about him.

"I surrender!" he cried.

Happy examined the leading burro's load, and selected a handful of tins of sardines and several tins of pears.

"You needn't look so scared, bo," he said reassuringly. "I ain't going to eat you. And you can tell your boss I'll be along to pay for these. I'm just kind of borrowing 'em."

He sat down by the road and devoured the sardines and then the pears, while El Capitan stood with hands uplifted before him. Then Happy threw the empty tins aside and jerked his head.

"You can hop it, buddy," he said. "You run along with them donkeys to wherever you are going."

The burro train pressed on to the capital, where Blanco tremblingly reported the hold-up by a giant American in field-marshal's uniform. The president, Senor Castro, gnawed at his moustache in anguish.

"You say you saw the troops with the Americano?" he asked.

"I did not exactly see them," Blanco reported.

"But from his confident bearing I knew he had many thousands of men in concealment. A giant of a man, he was, with blazing hair and a uniform more striking even than your Excellency's own!"

Poor old Castro tore what bit of hair he had left. He had thought the rebels were still some distance off, but now he was in despair.

"We are undone!" he exclaimed. "Del Forte has secured Americano assistance, and doubtless many thousands of guns, and even now the city is surrounded! Double the guards, or we shall be murdered in our beds! Tell the troops to prepare to sell their lives dearly for Cacao!"

His staff scratched their heads and regarded one another doubtfully. They were beginning to think that one president was very much like another, and if Del Forte had the city surrounded they might as well prepare themselves for a change of government.

Actually the rebel leader was still a score of miles away, although an advanced guard of cavalry had pushed on to near the city. Meanwhile Happy Muldoon had sat down by the roadside and taken off his boot. With dismay he regarded a huge blister on his heel.

"Darned if I can walk back to 'Frisco with that!" he said ruefully. "I wish I'd collared one of that little guy's donkeys. I've got to find me a horse of some sort."

He put his boot back and limped on, and then he stopped abruptly as he heard the whinney of a horse. Presently he came to where a full score of horses were tethered in a clearing. Happy looked them over from a distance.

"That big black one would just about suit me," he murmured.

It was the camp of Miguel Del Forte's advance guard, and the troops were sleeping about a slacked fire. Happy limped forward, and singled out the black stallion. A sleepy guard awoke with a jerk.

"Carramba! Who is there?"

Happy has just cast off the black stallion's halter, and he swung himself into the saddle. Meanwhile the camp had sprang to life, and an officer shouted an order.

"Every man for himself! We are attacked!"

They sprang to arms, and then the sentry came running. A thief in dazzling uniform had stolen

the officer's horse. They must pursue him at once.

"After the villain!" ordered the officer. "Bring him back, dead or alive!"

"Gosh!" gasped Happy. "These durn things ain't smooth riding!"

He had never ridden on horse-back before, and most of the time there was twelve inches of fresh air between the seat of his pants and the horse's back. But he hung on grimly, although he didn't know where he was heading for.

"I hope 'Frisco lies this way!" he panted.

Two score of enraged horsemen were thundering after him along the dirt road, and every now and then the leaders would take a pot shot at him.

"Where's a cop?" Happy panted. "I'll give these toughs in charge!" They thundered along the dirt road, and the pursuers were too excited to wonder where he was leading them, while Happy didn't know where he was going. As it was, he led a charge straight into the capital, and a frightened sentry threw down his gun.

"We are undone! Del Forte is here!"

Straight through the city they galloped, with guns popping, and forty outraged cavalymen close on Happy's heels. People crowded into shop doorways and peered from upper windows, and saw the red-headed Americano that rumour had spoken about.

"It is Del Forte's general! The cavalry are here."

To the frightened citizens it didn't look like a chase; it seemed that Happy was leading a cavalry charge, waving revolvers and popping them off at intervals. The nervous garrison decided that they had stood by President Castro long enough.

"All is over! The enemy is inside our defences!"

Inside the palace President Castro heard the shooting and the shouts of the crowd, and he turned pale.

"It is enough!" he murmured. "Useless to allow needless blood to be shed. I abdicate!"

He picked up the two carpet bags that contained most of the city's treasury, and he hastened down a service staircase and out of the back door of the palace. He had a small car waiting there, and he tossed his bags inside the car and climbed behind the wheel.

Meanwhile, Happy had galloped clean through the town. Outside the town again, the black stallion stumbled on a mesquite bush, and shot Happy over his head, and he lay dazed in a clump of cactus. Meanwhile his coal-black mount galloped on.

"Durn it!" Happy gasped. "If that's horse-riding, I'd sooner ride a bike!"

He started to scramble out of the cactus bush, and then he ducked hurriedly again at the thunder of hoofs. The pursuit swept by him, unaware that the black horse had shed its rider.

"Well, I'm not sorry to lose them guys," Happy murmured. "I guess I'll head back to town and hunt up a night's lodgings."

He picked the prickly cactus from his uniform and then limped back to Miguella. The streets were deserted, but the main square of the capital presented an impressive sight. The entire army of the republic was drawn up, with Major-General Juan Marquez at their head. Their arms were reversed, and the general's sword was sheathed. However, as Happy limped forward, the general drew the sword and offered the hilt to the red-headed one.

"We surrender!" he said. "I tender you my sword. Why shed useless lives when you are bound to conquer? Anyhow, President Castro has what the English call done a bunk, and the army do not want to fight. Your daring cavalry charge filled them with alarm. They beg of you to ask Del Forte to hold off his infantry."

Happy pulled himself together and accepted the general's sword.

"Sure, boss," he beamed. "Whatever you say goes. I guess that was quite a cavalry charge of mine. I'm not thinking of cutting up rough unless I have to. But who's this Del Forte bloke? I guess I don't know him."

The general raised his eyebrows. "But aren't you fighting on behalf of Miguel Del Forte?"

"Not much!" Happy said. "I don't know the guy. I'm doing all my scrapping on my own behalf."

General Marquez pulled himself together. It wasn't the first time Cacaolo had enjoyed two revolutions at the same time.

still yelling madly. Happy was installed in a grand bedstead with silk sheets, and he was interested to observe two armed sentries outside his door.

"General," he said, "tell them guys to bring the presidential bacon and eggs prompt at nine! I got a hard day's governing to do to-morrow!"

The President Abdicates.

HOWEVER, if President Happy Muldoon thought he was going to sleep right through to breakfast-time he was mistaken, for around about three o'clock he was awakened by one of the sentries shaking him anxiously. Happy opened his eyes and blinked wearily.

"What's eating you, boy?" he asked.

"The rebels!" cried the sentry. "Del Forte and



A HORSE-HAIR BREADTH ESCAPE!—Miguel Del Forte let up a yell when he saw the stampeding bullocks. A white horse flashed past him, and he caught frantically at its tail.

"Well," he said, "you have captured the city and if Del Forte advances, doubtless you can defend it. Will you take over the palace now?"

He led Happy inside, and when the crowd saw the imposing figure in the dazzling uniform appear on the balcony, they cheered wildly, while the soldiers stuck their hats on their rifles and waved them in the air. With a new president there was a chance of the army being paid, while under President Castro they hadn't drawn a cent. for three months.

"Viva el Presidente!" they shrieked.

"What do they say?" Happy inquired curiously.

"They shout long live the president," translated the general.

Happy looked about him curiously. "But where is the guy?" he asked. "Darned if I can see him!"

"President Castro has fled," General Marquez told him. "You are the new president of Cacaolo!"

"Well, I'll be gosh-darned!" Happy exclaimed. "How much cash does that job pull down?"

"Many thousands of Mexican dollars per year," the general told him. "But our presidents rarely last longer than two months, and then, unless they are warned and fly, someone generally shoots them!"

Happy scratched his head. "Well, *viva el presidente!*" he exclaimed. "And the *viva* the better! Tell me, do I sleep in a bed, for I feel like hitting the hay!"

The general led him inside, leaving the populaco

ten thousand men are preparing to attack the city. The army is panic-stricken. They are crying for *el presidente!*"

"Durn it!" said Happy. "Don't they let one night pass without a revolution in this blamed country? Hand me my official pants!"

He dressed hurriedly and hustled out, and he found the courtyard full of officers, while troops crowded the streets. General Marquez greeted him with relief.

"Del Forte is marching on the city with an enormous army," he said. "You will, of course, take command, and I hope the loyal troops will follow you."

An orderly led up a tall and bony white horse. "What's this for?" he demanded.

"You, your excellency," said the general. "You must command the troops on horse-back."

Happy had had his fill of horse-back riding the previous day. Still, there seemed nothing else for it. "Give me a hoist up, somebody," he said.

He struggled into the saddle, and while he clung there uncomfortably General Marquez rode beside him and explained the situation. The revolutionaries were massed on the west of the town, and the general had assembled the loyal cavalry to meet them.

"Right," Happy said briskly. "We'll charge 'em and run 'em off their feet, and then we can get back to bed. Where are our troops?"

General Marquez led him before them. The men

looked a sullen and discontented lot, and they scowled when they saw the new president and the general.

"You'd better make a speech," the general suggested. "Inspire them with the resolve to die for their beloved country!"

President Happy stood up in his stirrups and waved his sword.

"Now, you miserable stiffs!" he bellowed. "Are you going to help me knock this bunch of shysters for a loop? Have you all got yellow livers, or are you ready to back up and run 'em off their legs? Pull up your socks, for we're gonna charge. The first man among 'em will be promoted full corporal. Now, after me, stir up them bunches of cat's-meat! *Charge!*"

He slapped his horse with the flat of his sword and urged it forward, and it promptly bolted with him, straight over the plain to the long black shadow that represented the enemy troops. General Marquez gasped when he saw Happy go, for not a single man followed him. Happy was charging an army on his own, but he couldn't look round, so he didn't know it.

"Into 'em, boys!" he yelled. On the open mesa a herd of bullocks was grazing, and Happy went whooping right amongst them. The bullocks started and reared, and the disturbance caused a stampede. The whole herd of them went thundering after Happy with lowered horns.

In the camp of Del Forte the sentries heard the thunder of hoofs and sounded the alarm.

"The enemy are charging! Defend yourselves!" Then the charge arrived, consisting of Happy and a bolting horse and several hundred maddened bullocks. The camp was in confusion as wagons and guns were overturned, horses broke loose, and soldiers scattered for the woods. Miguel Del Forte stepped from his tent at the uproar.

"*Dios*, what is this?" he cried. "Help! I am gored!"

He bolted frenziedly with two bullocks on his heels, a comical little figure in a uniform as gorgeous as Happy's own. A white horse flashed ghost-like past him in the semi-darkness, and the rebel leader clutched frantically at its tail.

"Help!" he shouted. Happy Muldoon seized him by the collar and hoisted him across his saddle-bow, and his white horse swerved clear of the charging bullocks. Happy's mount was exhausted, and carried him and his prisoner back to Miguela meekly enough. Meanwhile the attacking troops were scattered in confusion, their camp was wrecked, and their leader was a prisoner. Happy rode into the deserted streets of the capital, and people ventured from their houses again. General Marquez hurried from the palace.

"Is it true, president?" he demanded. "They say you have scattered the revolutionary troops single-handed, and captured the terrible Miguel Del Forte!"

"You mean this little runt?" said Happy. "Sure, I captured him. Call a cop, and I'll turn him over general."

The miserable Del Forte was carried off to prison, and Happy hurried back to the palace for his breakfast. He invited the general to stay with him, and wired into a feed enough for about sixteen. He was just starting on the marmalade, when a series of explosions sounded outside the palace. Happy laid down the marmalade dish.

"Well, I'll be gosh-darned, general!" he exclaimed. "Surely they ain't staging revolutions twice a day in these parts? Tell 'em to hold off till I've finished my breakfast!"

"This isn't a revolution, your excellency," the general assured him. "The day has been proclaimed a public holiday and fiesta in your honour, and they are starting it with fireworks."

Happy grunted and finished his breakfast, and then he stepped out to look at the fireworks. He was greeted with thunderous cheers, and then the general told him he was expected to review the army.

"You mean them skunks who bolted when I asked 'em to charge this morning?" Happy asked. "I'm darned if I want to review that bunch!"

"But you must," the general told him. "At least they remained loyal; generally, when we have a revolution, the army stabs the old president in the back. Besides, they review much better than they fight."

So President Happy reviewed his troops, and after that General Marquez told him he ought to interview his cabinet. That took him another two hours, and then he had a foundation stone to lay and a petition to receive. By that time President Happy was yawning openly. It was the hardest day's work he had ever done in his life.

"This presidenting business is a tough graft," he said. "Are there any more odd jobs to do, general?"

"To-morrow," General Marquez told him, "you ought to review the navy."

Happy jumped. "Has Cacao got a navy, then?"

The general nodded proudly. "We have a torpedo boat destroyer we bought second-hand from the American government, and we keep it at the naval base of Porto Ricca."

Happy prodded General Marquez in the top row of medals.

"Look here, General," he said. "Order that raft around at eight o'clock in the morning ready to sail under secret orders. I can just use a navy!"

At eight o'clock the next morning President Happy Muldoon stepped aboard the *Crisostomo*, the pride and glory of Cacao, and three rear-admirals hastened to greet him and assure him of their loyalty. Happy didn't understand their Spanish, but he told General Marquez to tell them to head for San Francisco. The order was staggering, but Happy insisted, and the *Crisostomo* got under way.

Some days later the *Crisostomo* stood off San Francisco in semi-darkness. By President Happy's orders a dinghy had been lowered, and he and General Marquez descended into it alone. Happy took the oars, and pulled towards the lights of the water-front. While they were still half-a-mile out he shipped his oars.

"Well, general," he said, "I guess this is where I leave you. I can't take to that presidenting job somehow. I reckon you should be president of Cacao, general. Maybe they'll make you if you go back wearing this coat."

The general made a protest, but Happy slipped off his sword belt and his dazzling uniform coat with the rows of medals. He laid his plumed hat on a seat. Clad only in his shirt and trousers he slid over the side.

"Goo'-bye, general!" he shouted. "Don't take any flannel money! It shrinks!"

He struck out for the shore, and General Marquez took up the oars and pulled back to the waiting destroyer. President Happy Muldoon had abdicated.

Two hours later P.C. Pete Brady, of the San Francisco police, stood and surveyed a sprawling figure with his back against a bollard on the water-front. It was Happy Muldoon, sound asleep, but when the cop rapped him across the feet he blinked wearily and woke up.

"Still sleeping, Happy?" said the cop. "Ain't you never going to get a regular job of work?"

Happy yawned widely. "Not if I can help it, Pete!" he said.

There's a real rib-tickler next week, chaps, entitled "Shell Sock Socker!" Meet a new pal—Tommy Pink, and his boss, Professor Hypo, the Chem-mystic Kidder.

GLAMOROUS PROGRAMME OF GRAND YARNS AND GIFT BOOK FOR YOU NEXT WEEK, CHUMS!

YOUR EDITOR'S PAGE

Drop a line to:
THE EDITOR,
200, Gray's Inn Road,
LONDON, W.C.1.



MY DEAR CHUMS,

Another terrific free gift treat for you next week, chaps! The fourth *Wonder Book* in this grand gift series will be tucked inside another bumper story number of the *Mag*. And take it from your old Editor, this stunning twenty-eight-page volume, with its dazzling two-colour cover, notches several points higher in novelty and interest than the preceding three *Wonder Books* already presented.

From the title,

Wild Beasts of the Jungle

and *Monsters of the Deep* you will know it's good—and goodness knows, it is! Listen to a few of the contents. Jungle Giants, telling interesting facts and lore about Elephants, Rhinos, etc., in their natural surroundings; the Big Cats, novel new facts about Tigers, Lions, etc.; Reptiles, Birds, Fish, Big-Game Hunting, Whale-Fishing, etc.; are just a few of the subjects covered. And all are treated in racy, compelling style by the well-known big-game hunter and naturalist who has written this grand animal book for my readers. Don't miss this spanking gift next week, chums—and get on to the next six puzzlers in the Footballers' Names Competition.

To accompany this grand book I have planned a special programme of Animal and Snowline adventure yarns. A fascinating new character kicks off in a gripping yarn of the Arctic entitled

King of the Moose Herd!

Phew! Fellows! Talk about Tarzan of the Apes! He's mild meat compared to Mostyn, which is the name of our boy monarch of the animals of the frozen wastes. Astride his special ally, Zero, a gigantic bull moose, he leads the herd in a series of adventures against Eskimos and whalers that will flash like film flickers as you read.

Another hero of the Frozen North is

The Air Musher!

This glamorous character makes his bow in a rousing long complete action tale of the old and new. Aye, chaps, truly it has been written that "the old order changeth." The advance of science and civilisation alters the ideas and conventions of this old world. And "The Air Musher" tells how progress has penetrated even to the snow and ice regions of Alaska! It records the most dramatic era in the lives of Mushalong and Lonesome—uncle and nephew respectively. The former was a mail-carrier of the old regime, with sledge and snowshoes he has "mushed" the icy trails between Nome and Blizzard City, Alaska, for twenty years! Naturally, he resents his nephew joining forces with Rosseau, the new aeroplane mail-carrier so much that he takes on a mad wager with Rosseau that he will race the

airman to Nome. The result of that splendidly spectacular race—sledge and 'plane battling through the blizzard for big stakes—I'll leave you to read for yourselves in this tense epic of the snow and ice wilds next week.

Yes, the Boys of St. Giddy's are not forgotten. Dramatic and laughable events take place at the old school when an Arab junior joins the Remove. His coming signals a series of shocks and breathless experiences for the Joyous Juniors—and then, into the midst of this whirlwind of events rides none other than Captain Fury, of the French Foreign Legion! The reason for his coming you'll know when you get on to this high-powered thrill tale of school on Saturday.

By way of contrast to these grand thrillers, an entirely new complete yarn of fun on the footer-field appears. It introduces Dr. Hypo's Chem-Mystic Kid in three reeling chapters of mirth, entitled

Shell Sock Soccer!

Laugh! I nearly bust the arms of my chair as I sat with eyes glued to this amazingly novel tale of a Professor's amusing mixture and poor Tommy Pink's reactions to it on the footer-field. In a nutshell the Professor's concoction makes the subject speed up

JOKE COUPON.

Stick on postcard and send with your favourite joke to the JOKE EDITOR.

2 1 32.

his movements to about twenty times quicker than normal. And when Tommy gets on that footer-ground—well—he scores goals while the opposing side are getting their breaths, so to speak. As Tommy doesn't know very much about the game, however, he makes some laughable *faux pas*. The denouement of this yarn is as funny as the rest of it. Get ready to smile when you read it next week.

Gripping instalments of *Dick Turpin's Ghost* and the *Time-Ship Treasure-Hunters*, more news for Leaguers, and another free Dartboard Coupon complete this giant programme of good things. And there'll be another surprise for you from

Your sincere friend,

The Editor

P.S.—Better make sure of next week's splendid Free *Wonder Book*, "Wild Beasts of the Jungle and Monsters of the Deep," by ordering your copy of the *Mag*. in advance. There's bound to be a rush. And share this ripping gift with all your chums by telling them about it. These novel and fascinating volumes are only given away in "Boys' Magazine."

OUR SENSATIONAL SERIAL OF THE MAN IN MASK AND RUFFLES!



DICK TURPIN'S GHOST

The Will o' the Wisp Highwayman with His Wonder Horse, Bonny Black Bess, Hurtles o'er the Snowy Highway to Thrill and Fascinate You with a Fierce Exploit Two Centuries Ago!

he had entered, he walked across the snow to the pond, making a heavy trail with a dragged foot as he went. He flung a heavy stone through the ice, then returned to the house.

He roused the servants. None of them knew he had been there before. When they saw the blood on the floor of the drawing-room, the trail out through the window, there was only one conclusion to be drawn. Sir Rodney had been killed by footpads, and his body dropped in the lake.

And Fate played into his hands. While he went round to the front door, Dick Turpin had been to the house. Seeing the open window, he had peered through. He had read the signs of fighting, followed the trail, with the help of a candle, over the snow—and when Simeon, with a party of servants, came on to the lake again, there he was, standing at the jagged hole in the ice. Apparently caught red-handed!

The Fight.

DICK TURPIN, standing on that frozen lake, facing Simeon Black's pistol, saw the futility of protesting his innocence. He had, to all intents and purposes, been caught red-handed.

Yet a grim, shrewd suspicion was in Dick Turpin's mind. Everything pointed to the killing of Sir Rodney and the dropping of his body in the lake. But Dick was not satisfied.

His keen eye had told him that there was something unreal about that trail through the snow. Untrained observers would say that a body had been dragged through the snow; but Dick was certain that the snow had been disturbed by different means. A foot, dragged broadside, perchance?

Dick's eyes sought Simeon Black's great-boots. The right was densely packed with clinging snow. And Dick's heart jumped. This was a false trail! Sir Rodney was not dead!

"I know naught of this ill deed," said Dick quietly, looking not at Black, but at old Jaikes and the grooms. "You know me as Brian Cresswell, but I can explain——"

"Silence, scum," thundered Simeon. "Away with him, men!"

Bang! A pistol-shot rang out, close at hand. Simeon Black jumped as, with a curse, he stared into the gloom and heard something hiss past him, and he knew that it had been a bullet. He turned about, peering into the gloomy shrubbery.

"'T WAS the rascal Turpin, I tell you!" rasped Simeon Black. "Our nephew is dead, Cousin Rodney, and even now the killer lies bound in my cellar!"

"You lie, Simeon," replied old Sir Rodney Cresswell. "The young man who was in my house an hour gone was Brian!"

Simeon Black knew well that Rodney was wrong. He himself had foully shot the young boy that very day, when the lad was travelling from France on his first visit to England. After Brian, Simeon would be heir to the Cresswell Estates. . . .

Dick Turpin, the first to come upon the scene after Simeon left, found the lad but wounded. His heart full of rage, Dick determined to lay the crime on the shoulders of the real culprit. He had come himself to Cresswell Hall, posing as Brian, while the real heir lay in the care of his friends.

He had soon suspected Simeon to be the culprit. Simeon was a wastrel, and wanted money. What easier way than to inherit his cousin's estates? So Dick had ridden to Simeon's house for proof, but had fallen into a trap. Now, Simeon thought, he lay bound in the cellars.

Sir Rodney would not believe it. Simeon, furious, picked a quarrel with his cousin, and in the ensuing fight Sir Rodney fell, wounded. Simeon was frightened. He secured him in a secret underground chamber, known only to members of the family, and then, going out through the window, by which route

"Run, Dick!" yelled a voice. But Dick Turpin, thankful for this sudden diversion, had already wrenched himself free. Before Simeon Black could recover his composure, before he could pull trigger, Dick was upon him. In another second the pistol was flung into the snow.

"Well done, Jack!" said Dick Turpin coolly. "Faith, I little expected you to be so handy at such a moment."

Sixteen-String Jack was almost pale with consternation as he stepped into view. Worried about Dick Turpin, he had left Joe Button and Bootles in the Four Mile Wood to guard Brian Cresswell; and he had ridden forth into the gathering gloom of night, going first to The Gables—whither he knew Dick had carried Simeon Black—and then to Cresswell Hall. He had arrived opportunely.

"Come, Dick—we must away!" he panted, his usually mellow voice harsh with anxiety.

"Ay, 'tis sound advice—yet I am loth to take it," said Dick Turpin. "'Twill be an admission of guilt, Jack—and this base villain is the culprit."

He fired one of his pistols into the air, and the grooms, startled, shrank back. With one bound, Dick Turpin reached the lake's edge, and a minute later he and Sixteen-String Jack were leaping upon their horses and riding away.

The Capture.

CRASH-CRA-A-A-SH! The heavy door, under the united efforts of the Bow Street Runners, at last gave way and splintered. For over an hour the trapped Runners had been fighting to escape; but so stout were the doors of the old Haunted Inn, and so closely shuttered the windows, that success had not rewarded their efforts until now.

"Split me!" roared Seth Bradshaw, as he blundered out into the snow and the darkness. "We're free! To your horses, men!"

"For what purpose?" growled the fat Jeremiah. "Think ye that we can find the knaves now?"

"'Tis no use, Master Bradshaw," said Noah Claypole. "Far better had we ride to the nearest inn—"

"To horse!" rapped out the chief of the Runners. "Perchance we shall get word of the knaves from Master Black at 'The Gables.' And do not forget that Turpin was attempting to rob Cresswell Hall."

They galloped hard, and presently, through the trees, they caught a glimpse of a yellow light. Bradshaw pointed.

"See! Cresswell Hall!" he jerked out.

"Why go to an inn, and pay good money for food, when we may well have it at Sir Rodney's expense? He'll not turn us away after he has heard our story."

They continued riding with greater eagerness, and they were still some little distance from the drive gates when they heard the sharp, unmistakable report of a pistol.

"Rip me! What's that?" shouted Seth Bradshaw. "Hold, men!" They drew rein, and dimly along the road ahead they saw a rider shoot out from the drive. And Seth gave a gulp when he saw that the rider was coming in this direction.

"Back—back!" he hissed. "Get your horses into the hedge—and do not move until I give the word."

He had no knowledge as to who this solitary rider might be; but he did not mean to take any chances. Probably the fellow was only a servant of the Hall, riding for help. There seemed to have been trouble.

On he came, galloping hard.

"Now!" roared Bradshaw suddenly. The Runners appeared from the hedges as though by magic, and Dick Turpin, riding at full tilt, was taken completely by surprise. He suddenly saw the horsemen block the road ahead of him. The hedges were high; they could not be jumped. There was but one chance. Dick put his horse straight at the nearest rider. Seth Bradshaw yelled hoarsely as Black Bess's hoofs knocked him from the saddle, while Dick sailed clear over the top. But there was another horse behind Seth, and Dick was unable to rein up in time.

Thud—clash! The shock of the horses colliding sent Dick Turpin reeling, and he was unsaddled. He fell heavily to the ground, the horse stamping madly. One of the lashing hoofs caught the Hero Highwayman on the thigh just as he was rising, and he fell again, wracked with sudden agony.

And that brief delay made all the difference. For by now the Runners were off their horses, and they had gathered round him. Rough hands were laid upon him, and he was half-dragged, half-assisted to his feet.

"Let's have a look at ye," came Seth Bradshaw's familiar voice. "If I've made a mistake, good sir,



JACK LENDS A HAND.—Something suddenly dropped from the trees, and it landed straight between the two men. A hard fist rammed into Seth Bradshaw's face, and he and his companion were flung from the coach.

I'll humbly apologise. But there had been a plague of queer doings——"

"It's all right, sir," interrupted Dick, with a rich Essex brogue. "I be one o' the servants from the Hall. Sir Rodney, my master, sends me post haste into the village on an errand."

"Hold him—hold him!" came a shout from down the road. "Whoever you are, hold that man! He is Turpin, the highwayman!"

The air was full of shouts. Simeon Black was arriving, and with him were several grooms, three of them carrying lanterns.

"May I rot if it's not the Runners themselves!" shouted Simeon Black exultantly. "Well done Master Bradshaw! Ye shall be richly rewarded for this good piece of work! I'll see that a word is put in for ye! Know ye that 'tis Dick Turpin you hold?"

"Split me, I've been wanting to get my hands on the knave!" vowed the chief of the Runners. "Zounds! 'Tis true enough! Turpin himself!"

Leather thongs were pulled tightly and cruelly about Dick. He was deprived of his sword and his pistols. Then, helpless, he was marched back to Cresswell Hall.

Here, all was commotion. Seth Bradshaw looked about in surprise.

"'Tis the knave Turpin again," said Simeon Black. "As I told you once before, Turpin has been masquerading here as young Brian Cresswell. But 'twas merely a part of his ugly plot. He killed the boy, and came here in his place. Now he has killed Sir Rodney!"

"Od's bones!" ejaculated Bradshaw. "Ay, he'll hang for this! We'll make no mistake with the rascal this time. We'll take him into Colchester post-haste, and hand him to the sheriff."

And so, without delay, the private coach which had brought Brian Cresswell to the Hall, was prepared; Dick Turpin, still tightly roped so that there was no possibility of escape, was bundled in; and

with him sat Noah Claypole, pistol ready. Seth Bradshaw and Giles Padger took their seats on the box. Jeremiah Bloot was left behind at the Hall—in charge, as a representative of the law.

And so off they went, and it seemed, indeed, that Dick Turpin's career was for ever ended.

Black Carries On.

NO sooner had the coach rolled away than Simeon Black secured his horse.

"I ride to Colchester—to lay full information before the sheriff," he declared. "Mayhap I shall not be back until morning." But after he had gone, he did not take the road to Colchester. He was not thinking of the coach and its prisoner. He had other work to do—grim, sinister work, as foul as any he had yet done.

Sir Rodney was hidden—and Turpin, without question, would hang for that. But there still remained Brian Cresswell—and Simeon Black saw, here, a way of killing two birds with one stone.

Thus, instead of riding in the wake of the coach, towards Colchester, he took the road which led towards the Four Mile Wood. Leaving his nag on the outskirts of the wood, he advanced in the darkness.

At last he came within sight of the little clearing. And there, sure enough, he saw a gleam of yellowish light. He advanced cautiously. The wind was sighing in the trees over his head. He stumbled against something, and he knew that it was a loose piece of rock. An idea came to him, and he picked up the rock, and tucked it under his arm.

Then he withdrew both his pistols, and held their muzzles skywards. He pulled the triggers.

Bang! Bang! The reports rang out like miniature thunderclaps. And on the instant, Black rushed across the open space until he was some distance from the spot where he had fired. He saw the door of the hut burst open, and two figures came running out.

"For de mercy's sake," came the startled voice of Bootles, the black highwayman. "What was dat, Massa Button?"

Crash! Both the highwaymen heard the sound—as though somebody had stumbled amid the trees, well over to their left. They could not guess that Simeon Black, in a totally different direction, had just hurled that lump of rock. The pair was lured off. They ran into the trees.

And Simeon Black, who knew that he could accomplish his purpose within the space of ten seconds, ran into the hut. A candle was guttering, and the only occupant of the hut was Brian Cresswell—who lay helpless upon the ramshackle bed.

Once before, Simeon Black had visited this hut with murder in his heart, but Bootles had beaten him then. Bootles was not here now. Brian was alone—at the intruder's mercy!

The Escape.

THE coach lumbered on heavily through the thick snow. On the box Seth Bradshaw was already spending, in his mind, the rich reward he would receive for the taking of Dick Turpin.

The coach lumbered down a steep little hill, the brakes grinding. Then through a dense patch of woodland, where the trees met overhead in a thick canopy. In the summer-time this was a very pretty stretch of road; but now, in dead of winter, and at night, it struck gloomy and mysterious.

Seth Bradshaw whipped up the horses, anxious to be out again into the open. The chief of the Runners was no fool; he was half-expecting a rescue attempt. It was for this reason, indeed, that he had decided to convey Dick Turpin to Colchester by coach. Within that vehicle Dick was beyond reach of his comrades——

THE BLACK EMPEROR'S LAST BOMB-SHELL—(Continued from page 17.)

Black Emperor still hurled his deadly weapon at them through the heavens.

Monty Ruggles banked sharply and dived beneath the bomber, and roared back on his tracks. Again he dropped a bomb, and his heart was in his mouth lest he missed again. But this time fortune favoured him. The bomb scored a direct hit, and the tower vanished in a blaze of flame.

Sam gave a hoarse yell of triumph as the bomber, released from its control, dived earthwards. Faster and faster it fell, like a vast silver fish. Down, down, right into the heart of the inferno of blazing petrol. There was a deafening explosion, and the whole earth seemed to dissolve into flames as the bomb exploded. The uprush of displaced air lifted them like a cork and hurled them several hundred feet. By a miracle, Monty got the ship to a level keel again. Then he looked over the edge of the cockpit at what had once been the Black Emperor's war base. Not a trace of it remained now; only a huge crater like a gigantic volcano pouring out volumes of dense smoke, through which scarlet flames twisted and flickered like lightning among thunder-clouds. The Black Emperor was no more. He and all his associates had perished by the very weapon with which they had planned to destroy London.

"I guess we've written *finis*," Sam said soberly.

Look out next week for a smashing budget of yarns, and the fourth ripping Wonder Book, "Wild Beasts of the Jungle, and Monsters of the Deep." It tells you all about the strange and monstrous things in the Animal Kingdom.

Something suddenly dropped from the overhanging canopy of tangled tree branches. It dropped like a stone, and so unerringly had it judged its time that it landed fairly and squarely on the box of the coach between the two men.

"'S'blood!" babbled Seth Bradshaw. "What the——"

Crash! Before he could utter another sound a hard fist rammed into his mouth. He was shoved so violently that he fell headlong from the coach, to crash on his back into the snow-filled ditch. The horses, startled by the commotion, broke into a gallop.

The next second Giles Padger felt the full weight of Sixteen-String Jack's fist. It had all happened in a moment. Giles went flying off the box backwards—just as Seth had done. He crashed on to the road, howling and cursing. And Sixteen-String Jack, gathering the reins, urged on the steeds.

"What's amiss?" came a startled yell from within

pleasantly. "Like as not we shall overturn—and that'll be the death of us both."

Up on the box, Sixteen-String Jack was glowing with justifiable triumph. His plan had worked!

He had witnessed the start of the coach from Cresswell Hall, and he had heard quite sufficient to tell him exactly what was toward. So he had ridden on in advance—taking up his position in the overhanging trees. And there he had waited—ready.

A full mile he took the coach, tearing along at breakneck speed. Then, just as suddenly, he pulled on the reins, and long before the coach had rolled to a standstill he was down, and with a violent wrench he pulled open the door.

"Hands up!" he shouted. "How now, Master Claypole?"

Noah Claypole gulped—and Dick Turpin prayed. He fully expected that pistol in Noah's hand to go off. But even in the gloom Sixteen-String Jack saw the danger, and with a sudden wrench he pulled at



BLACK BESS BEATS 'EM!—Dick put his horse straight at the nearest of the runners. Black Bess sailed into the air, her feet sending Seth Bradshaw crashing from his saddle.

the coach. "Hey, there! What are ye doing, Seth? Is aught wrong?"

"Hold ye the prisoner!" roared Jack, doing his best to imitate Seth's voice. "There's trouble enough—but we'll get clear of it, never fear."

He urged on the horses, and the coach was now rolling and swaying dangerously. On it went, tearing at full tilt. Dick Turpin, within, had some suspicion of what was doing, and his heart was thudding. Noah Claypole was badly scared; at any moment he expected the coach to overturn.

"Hold still, knave!" he snarled, jabbing the muzzle of his pistol into Dick Turpin's chest. "A sound or a move from you, and I'll pull trigger!"

"Methinks the horses have run amuck," said Dick

Noah's arm, and as the Runner's finger pressed on the trigger, the barrel shifted so that the bullet crashed through the side of the coach.

"A plague on ye!" snapped Jack harshly. "Faith, I thought ye were done for, Dick."

Crash! The butt of Jack's pistol descended upon Noah Claypole's head, and the Runner fell back, losing all interest in the proceedings.

And then Sixteen-String Jack's knife got to work; and in a very short time Dick Turpin was stretching his arms. He leapt to the ground, and he took his comrade's hand in his.

"Thanks, Jack," he said warmly. "'Twas well done, friend!"

"Ay, but the outlook is as black as can be," said Sixteen-String Jack mournfully. "They're after ye

for killing, Dick—and they'll have us all unless we are careful."

"They'll not have us," vowed Dick Turpin, his eyes blazing. "We need our liberty, good Jack. There's work for us to do—the hounding down of Simeon Black. Ay, and the finding of Sir Rodney. I'll swear the old man lives."

The thought startled him. "Yes, and there is other work—immediate work," he went on. "I am afraid, Jack. Black is a dangerous, desperate man. I think, now, of that helpless boy, in the hut."

"But Joe and Bootles are there," protested Sixteen-String Jack.

"Nevertheless, we will ride there, too—and make all haste in our going," said Turpin crisply. "Come!"

There were horses for them, and long before the Bow Street Runners could collect themselves and take any action, the two daring highwaymen were away, and the coach horseless.

Meanwhile, Brian Cresswell, helpless on that sick bed, saw the door of the hut open. He had heard

the shots, and he had wondered what was amiss. Now, to his horror, he saw the distorted features of Simeon Black. The boy was so bewildered by all that had been happening that he scarcely realised that this man was his uncle.

"Who are you?" he panted, his chest paining him by the very force of his breathing. "Help! Help!"

"Ay, croak away!" leered Simeon Black, advancing. "This time, you whelp, there shall be no mistake. You'll come with me—and disappear for all time!"

He leapt forward, and Brian, unable to move a limb to save himself, closed his eyes. And then came a sharp command from the doorway—uttered like the crack of a pistol-shot.

Simeon Black jumped round and stared into the relentless face of Dick Turpin.

In the nick of time Dick has returned to save the life of the boy. But will he be able to solve the mystery of Sir Rodney, and clear himself of the terrible charge against him?

THE SCHOOLBOY GLADIATORS—

(Continued from page 14.)

like the rest, in toga, helmet, and armour stepped out of the group and elbowed Snowball off Johnny's chariot.

"Hi! What am you doing!" yelled the little darkie. He grabbed at the other, but he was too late. The chariots were off, and Johnny had a new passenger!

The shouts of his chums were drowned by the roar of the engine of the bike in front of him. He roared on to the asphalt of the quad, the ancient engine shuddering and clattering under the unwonted strain. It might come to bits any minute, Johnny knew—but while it went, he was determined it should go like billy-o!

They were on the first straight, and Johnny had had the advantage on the corner. He throttled down for a moment while he jerked on the string tied to the gear lever. There was a clash and a click, and he was in second.

More throttle, and he leapt forward again. Dick's was a better bike, and slowly crept up—but Johnny's passenger "knew his onions" when it came to cornering, leaning out over the side to prevent skids, and enabling Johnny to take the corner much faster.

"Hot stuff, Snowball!" he grinned, as he hauled on the reins and pulled the machine into the straight—right down the side of the quad to the end where the Mayor sat. "We're going to win..."

He broke off with a gasp as a powerful arm fastened round him, and another snatched the reins from his grasp. Out of the corner of his eye he caught a glimpse of his passenger's face—and it was not Snowball, but Napolo! He had escaped from the box-room, and overpowered Tony Graham, whose outfit he now wore!

Johnny struggled furiously, while the machine rocketed down the straight. He could see the spectators gesticulating, but the shouts they were uttering were drowned by the engine.

It was all over in a second. Johnny felt himself hanging over space for a moment, then he fell with a crash on to the hard asphalt. He rolled over and over, but like every good footballer he knew how to fall without hurting himself. Scratched and bruised, he staggered to his feet, to see the Italian, the reins in his hands, steering the hurtling machine straight for the Mayor!

All round the quad ories of horror sounded, and fellows were instinctively starting forward in impossible attempts to avert the disaster. Dick opened his throttle wide in an effort to overtake the other

chariot and head the fanatic off, but he saw it was hopeless.

Alongside the Mayor, Hooper had forgotten Neb, the goat. And Neb, free once more, sniffed the air in rage at the medley of shouts that came to his ear. His eye caught sight of the huge creature, now no more than twenty yards off, that was charging down on him, bellowing its defiance, Neb thought, in a series of explosive pops. The arrogance, the shape, and the scent of the Thing, all annoyed that crusty old goat—and Neb leapt the fence with a gigantic spring and went in to the attack!

His huge curved horns lowered, he rocketed straight for that rickety mo-bike and chariot. There was a huge crash as the two—the game animal and the mechanical juggernaut—met, and everyone turned their eyes away from the apparent slaughter of a fiery old billygoat.

Rage-filled snorting sounds followed. Eyes opened—and gasps went up. Where a motor chariot had been was now a mash of disrupted machinery! Napolo lay on the ground, apparently stunned by the impact, while Neb, the smashed front wheel of the bike hanging round his hairy neck, jabbed at the remains with his horns, looking for the huge animal it has just charged. Neb was ripe for battle, and he didn't like his enemies to disappear into thin air!

However, by the time Dick had brought his chariot to a standstill, and the Removites had reached the spot, he had cooled down, and forgotten the fight. He was put on a rope, and tied up securely, while Napolo, who showed signs of returning consciousness, was held in many hands and bound.

P.C. Dooley, who arrived at that moment, in answer to the Head's telephone call, took him in charge and marched him off. The Italian killer went, mouthing threats which he was never to fulfil, for three days later he left England under an extradition warrant, never to return.

The rest of the Speech Day celebrations were an unqualified success. Nebuchadnezzar was the hero of the hour and occupied the place of honour at the feed to which Johnny Gee & Co. entertained Captain Monteith after the display. When it was all over Captain Monteith's servant led the goat, now in good humour once more, to the Mayor's house. There he would be cared for until his real owner claimed the runaway.

Another smashing long yarn of Johnny and his chums at St. Giddy's is coming next week, chaps. And look out for the next Wonder Book, "Wild Beasts of the Jungle," given free on Saturday.

A RIPPING PRIZE FOR THE SENDER OF
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THE JESTER'S REALM

Football and Fountain Pens awarded to senders of jokes on this page. Send your favourite joke on P.C. with coupon on Page 25, to Joke Editor, "Boys' Magazine," 196, Gray's Inn-rd., London, W.C.1.

KNEW WHAT HE WANTED.

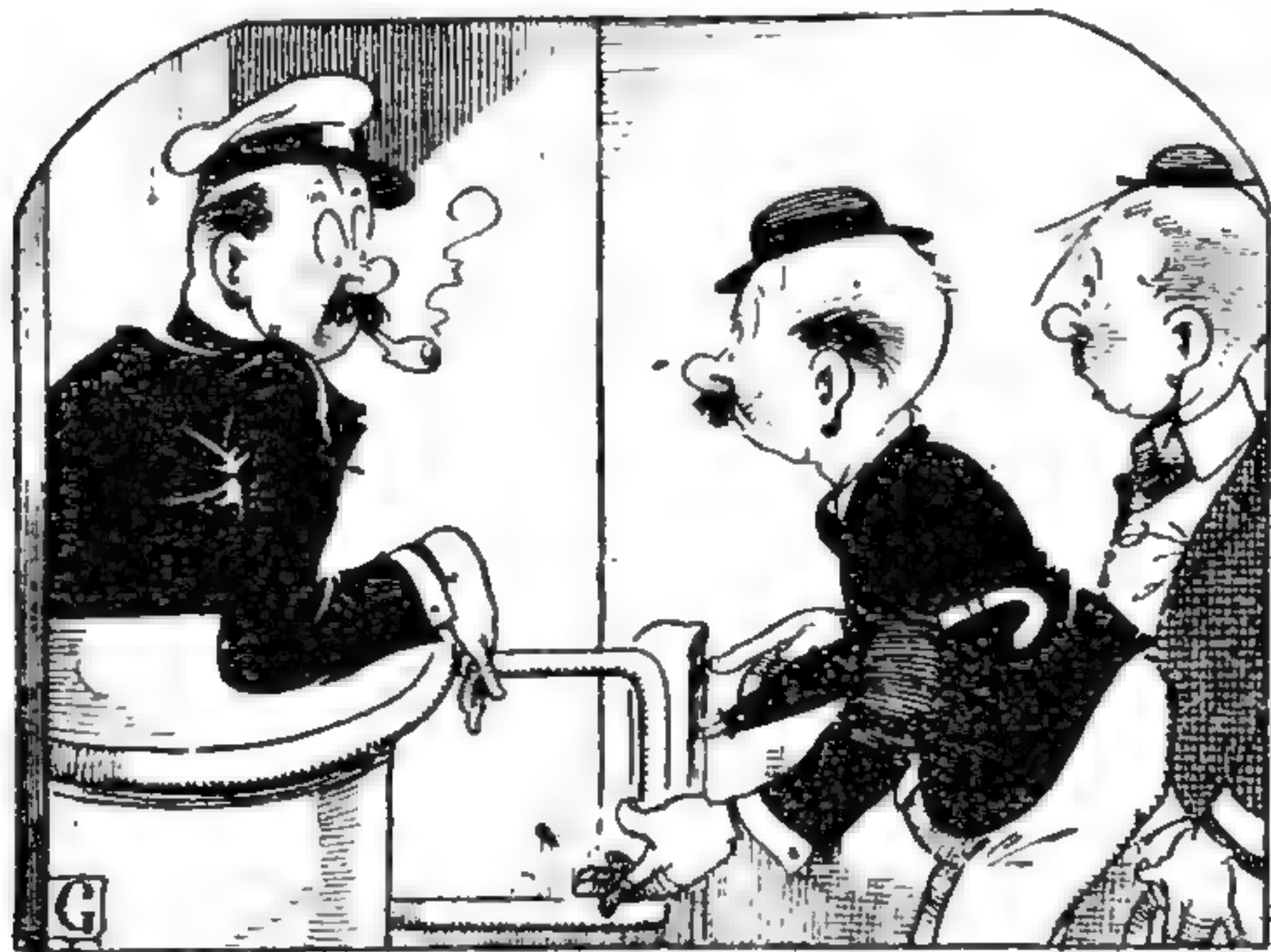
The canvasser called at the lady's house soliciting a vote for a municipal candidate.

"Oh," said the lady, "I never vote either at a municipal or parliamentary election. There was only one man who ever went to Westminster and tried to do his duty."

"And who was that?" asked the canvasser.

"Guy Fawkes!" exclaimed the voter as she slammed the door.

(Fountain pen to ARTHUR BRACEWELL, 18, Warrel's Avenue, Bramley, near Leeds.)



Guide: You'll have to wait if you want to see the galleries. Smoking isn't allowed up there.

Visitors: But we aren't smoking.

Guide: No, but I am!

(Football to JOHN PETHERAM, Etloe Villa, Blakeney, Glos.)

Q.E.D.

TEACHER: Your essay is excellent Jones Minor, but it is exactly the same as Smith's. What shall I conclude from that?

JONES MI.: That his is excellent, too, sir!

(Fountain pen to M. WATSON, Haydon, Haydon Bridge, Northumberland.)

VERY HOT!

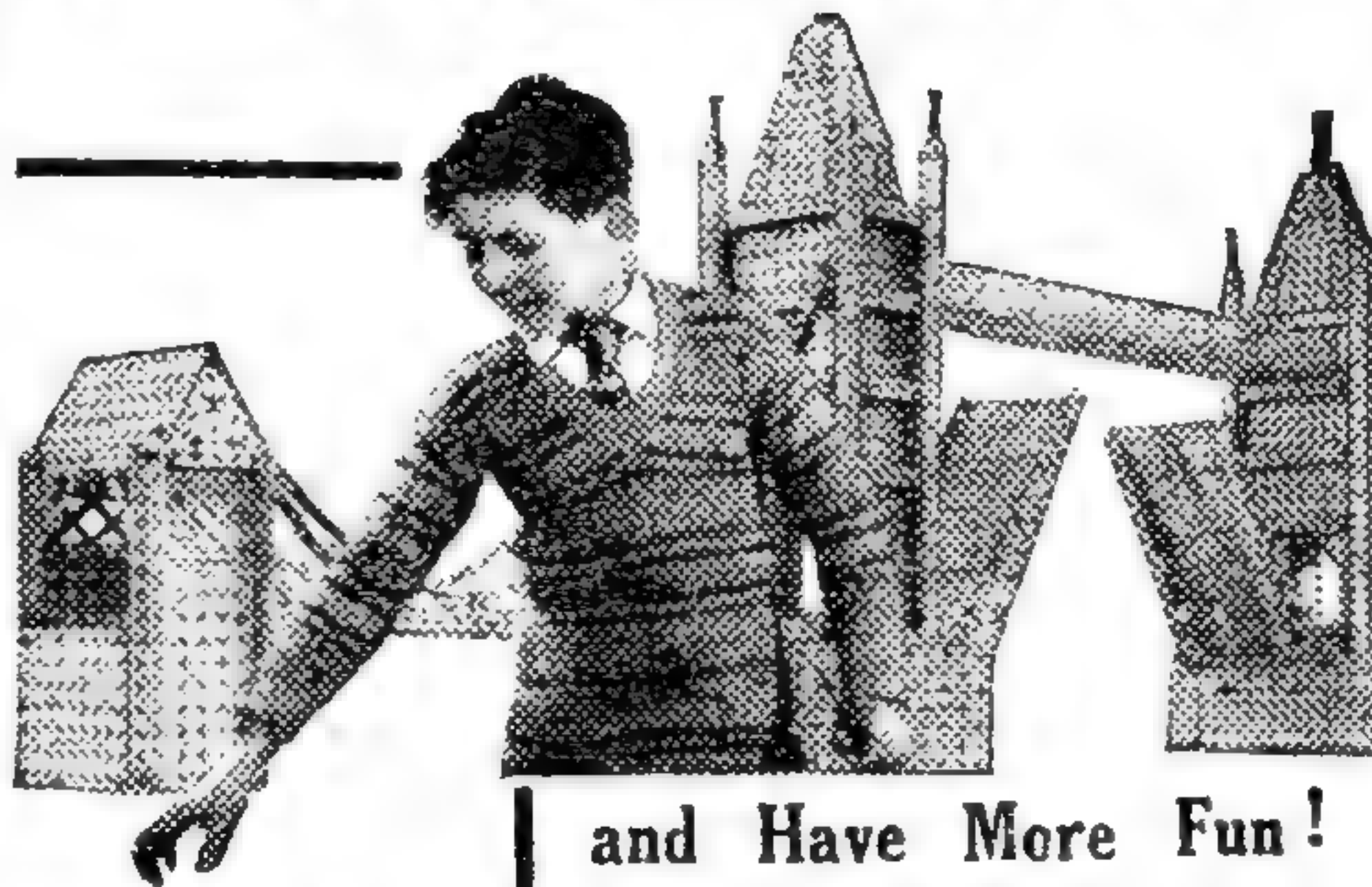
A system of memory training was being taught in school. The teacher was becoming enthusiastic.

"For instance," he said; "supposing you want to remember the name of a poet—Bobby Burns. Fix in your mind's eye the picture of a policeman in flames. See?—Bobby Burns!"

"Yes, I see," said a bright pupil. "But how is one to know it does not represent Robert Browning?"

(Fountain pen to G. MARSHALL, 41, Protheroe Road, Fulham, S.W.6.)

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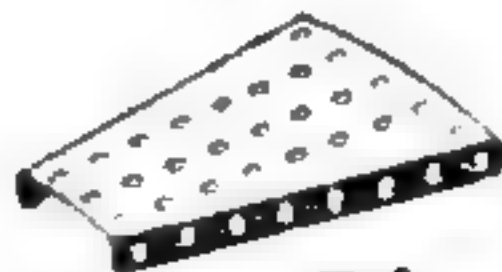
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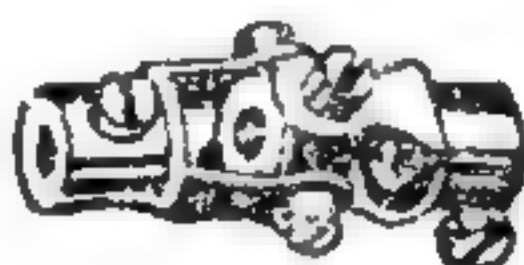
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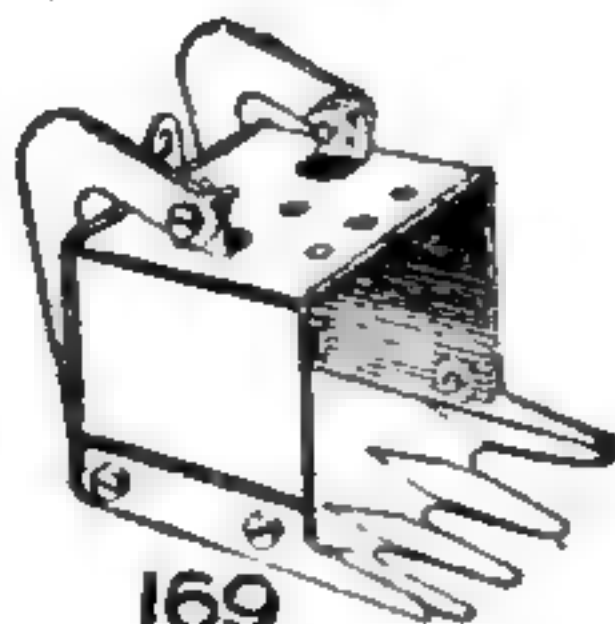
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OLD SWAN

LIVERPOOL

STUNNING MYSTERY YARN OF A VOYAGE THROUGH TIME!

THE TIME-SHIP

TREASURE HUNTERS

*Grand Instalment of the Mag.'s
Mighty Science Tale*

JOURNEYING back into history by means of a marvellous invention that made travel possible through Time, four chums sought the huge treasure of Amenemhat, the Egyptian. He buried it, according to a papyrus Bill Morgan had found, in 4000 B.C. They traced it—Bill, his nephew Bob, Roddy Blane, the young inventor of the machine, and Mike Rooney—through the centuries, from the time it was dug from its hiding-place till, in the year 1665, it was on board the ship of La Tollée, the pirate.

They awaited La Tollée on Half-Moon Island, whither they knew he was sailing. Before he came, they fell foul of Panama Pete, and two other pirates, on the same errand as themselves. Bob was captured and bound, while the pirates went to capture the time-ship. He got free, only to find La Tollée himself on his trail. Bob was held, and La Tollée was about to kill him when Panama Pete dropped from the sky on to La Tollée's back.

Hitting Back.

BOB stood transfixed. How Panama came to fall out of the skies was a mystery beyond his comprehension. For a space nobody moved. The only sound was a hissing intake of breath—an awed gasp from thirty throats.

Panama Pete was the first to recover himself. He shot a glance at La Tollée's body sprawling at his feet and growled deep down in his throat. Then, like lightning, he stooped to snatch up the fallen rapier and dropped into a crouch.

The spell was broken. There came an uproar, sudden, savage, and hideous, that shattered the dazed silence to shreds. Swords flashed in the moonlight and a flaming ring of steel hemmed Panama in. He crouched lower, then sprang—clean past Bob who was knocked spinning sideways, and into the thick of La Tollée's men. Steel clashed on steel, mingling with the sound of oaths; the uproar grew, till it was like the snarling outcry of a wolf-pack; stricken yells blended with it . . .

The fight was moving across the clearing. Evidently Panama's charge had carried him through the circle of his foes; now he was fighting a rearguard action, with the La Tollée faction yelping like a pack of curs on his heels—hacking a way towards the shelter of the trees . . . Bob heaved himself to his knees. As he did so, a hand closed on his shoulder.

Whirling round on his knees, he glimpsed a shadowy figure rising above him. His jaw tightened. One man wasn't going to stop him making his getaway—no, nor half-a-dozen. Flinging his arms round the fellow's legs, he heaved with all his might, at the same time jabbing his head hard into the pit of the man's stomach.

The plan succeeded. Down came the other with a thud, pitching across Bob and carrying him back



to the ground. A fierce wriggle, however, and Bob was uppermost. He jerked back his arm, ready to smash his fist into his assailant's face.

"Stop that, you scug!" he muttered.

From the man below came a gasp—and a protest. "You blithering idiot! What the—? It's—me!"

"Roddy! Gosh, I thought—" Bob rolled sideways and came to his feet in a bound. Roddy it was. But it was no time for apologies.

"What next?" he gasped.

Roddy's answer came swiftly. "Hop it—while the going's good. C'mon!"

A giant of a fellow, swinging a cutlass, tried to stop them as they dived for the bushes. Roddy ducked under the hissing steel and drove his fist into the pirate's face. There must have been something clenched in his hand, for knuckles alone could not have produced the shattering effect of that one blow. The fellow reeled back, his hands lifting to a bleeding and broken face. He sprawled to the ground, and Bob stopped to grab his cutlass as he followed Roddy among the bushes. Behind them, the clamour of the fight grew louder; the screech of awakened parrots in the trees added to the din. Yells and snapping timber told the chums that some of the pirates were in pursuit . . .

They ran downhill, catching an occasional glimpse of the horseshoe bay between the tree-trunks. The noise of fighting lessened, and yells from different directions suggested that Panama had broken loose and that the La Tollée gang was searching for him.

"Keep 'em busy for a bit," grinned Roddy. "Steady, boy."

They were on the fringe of the beach—a wide half-circle of white coral. Down at the water's edge, two ship's boats were drawn up on the sand; out on the shimmering waters of the bay, the pirate craft—the *Raven*—was anchored, a vicious-looking, rakish vessel that was built, like a wasp, for speed and sting. Lights showed fore and aft, and a snatch of drunken song carried across the water to the youngsters as they crouched among the bushes.

"Better lie low a bit," suggested Roddy.

Bob nodded acquiescence. "I say," he said suddenly. "Where did Panama Pete come from?"

"Haven't you rumbled that?" laughed Roddy softly. "Why, he was pitched off the time-ship—that, or he fell out. The time-ship was overhead

when you were scrapping with La Tollée . . . You put up a jolly good scrap, by the way . . . Everybody was too busy watching you to notice it. I was myself . . ."

"But—"

Roddy went on gravely. "Looks to me as if Panama and Sharkteeth have collared the ship. Otherwise Bill would have butted in, instead of drifting out of sight as soon as Panama had dropped overboard . . ."

"You didn't see the time-ship?"

"No, but—there's proof." Roddy pushed out his hand. Glancing down, Bob saw the black shape of a big automatic clasped in it.

"That's Bill's gun," went on Roddy. "And it came down out of the sky with Panama. Dropped right at my feet. And—" he added reflectively, "it's going to come in mighty useful. That next move now?"



TURNING PIRATES!—Roddy's fist shot out, and the man crashed into the rail. Amid a splintering of wood, he fell back into the sea.

"Yes?"

Roddy pondered for a few minutes. "We've learned a thing or two," he said thoughtfully. "We know, f'r instance, the treasure's out there—aboard the *Raven*. Safe in La Tollée's cabin, I'd say. We know there's only a skeleton crew aboard. La Tollée is a sick man, judging by the way Panama dropped on him—and if he has come round, he'll be too keen on getting his hands on Panama to bother about us. Two determined fellers might collar the *Raven* and the treasure as well. It's been done before—"

Bob's eyes opened wide. "You mean—we collar the *Raven*?" he gasped.

Roddy nodded. "That's the bright idea. It ought to be fairly easy. You'll observe those two boats are unguarded. The fellows left in charge of them are probably helping in the search for Panama. It's a risk, but—what about it?"

Bob's eyes shone. There was pirate blood in his veins; perhaps one of his ancestors had been the great buccaneer, Morgan. Anyway, Bob felt his

pulses hammering now—a desire for action, full, red-blooded action, hammering at his brain.

"I'm on," he said simply. "Do we start now?"

Pirate Cut Pirate.

THEY wasted no time. Creeping from the bushes, they made for the boats, half-expecting to hear the challenging roar of a musket. But, save for distant shouts inland where the La Tollée gang were questing for Panama, no sound broke the silence. They reached the nearer boat. It was a whale of a tub, heavy and clumsy, built to be propelled by four oars aside. The sand was sticky. Only after herculean efforts did Bob and Roddy manage to launch it.

Even then, Roddy regarded it doubtfully. "Might

have been better to swim for it," he muttered. "Except—this bay's pretty sure to be alive with sharks. We're going to have a whale of a job getting it across to the *Raven*."

But it proved to be less difficult than Roddy anticipated. True, it was not a job for two men to handle a boat of that size; but the ebbing tide and the set of the current helped them. Despite the brightness of the moon, they were drifting under the *Raven*'s bows before they were challenged.

A thick, husky voice hailed them from the deck.

"Ahoy, there!" Roddy rested on his oars and leaned forward to Bob. "Drunk," he whispered. "That makes things easier." Aloud he yelled, feigning a realistic roughness of voice. "We're coming aboard. Message from the cap'n."

The man—visible now as a dark blur leaning over the rail—shouted something incoherent in reply. Roddy did not trouble to listen, having decided that bold and immediate action was essential to the success of his scheme. Grasping the anchor cable, he swung himself upwards hand over hand, heaved himself over the rail, and dropped to the deck.

Within a couple of seconds Bob landed beside him. The figure by the rail straightened up and lurched towards them.

Only then did the pirate realise that something was amiss. He opened his mouth to utter a yell—and Roddy leapt at him.

Crash! His knuckles thudded into the man's mouth, clipping the shout short and sending him reeling back against the rail. There was a sound of splintering wood, the rail caved outwards, and the pirate, his legs flying grotesquely into the air, vanished overboard. A dull splash floated up from below.

Roddy grinned. "Oh less. Now——" He broke off. From the man in the water came a succession of shrill screams—screams that could not be silenced, that echoed from end to end of the ship and brought answering yells from somewhere in its cabins. Roddy's jaw tightened. "That's torn it," he muttered. "In a brace of shakes we're going to see what we're up against."

He was right. As the screams died away in a choking gurgle, feet clattered on the deck. Shadowy figures loomed up out of the moon-mist—a score of them, at least. Men who in that uncertain light looked scarcely human, who came in a snarling rush, brandishing sword and pistol as they ran. Cursing, they came on—to halt at the sight of two resolute figures standing on the edge of the pogo-deck.

Only for a moment, however, did their hesitation last. Then one of them—a huge mulatto, naked save for a pair of stained plush trousers—hurled himself forward.

Roddy's voice rang loudly: "Get back, you scum. Get back, or——"

It was mere waste of breath. Now the mulatto was only a few yards away, tensing his huge body for a spring that would carry him halfway up the poop-ladder. His shining ebony face showed in the moonlight like that of a savage beast—teeth bared in a snarl, the whites of his eyes showing. . . . Action, not words, was needed now.

Crack! Roddy's automatic spat flame, and the mulatto jerked upright, to slump in a squirming heap to the deck, as his knee-cap was shot away. But his fall did not stay the rest. They were used to pistols that fired one ball. They imagined that Roddy's gun must be empty, and they meant to give him no time to reload.

But they had made a grievous mistake. *Crack!* *Crack!* Twice more the automatic barked. A huge, red-bearded fellow in the van of the attack dropped his sword and clutched a shattered wrist; another dropped back, cursing and yelping together, as a bullet carried away the lobe of his ear. The rest halted in indecision.

Yet there was no time for parley. Already a new peril was threatening the crash of all Roddy's schemes. Shoreward sounded other yells, and Bob, turning his head for an instant, saw dark, running figures on the white beach. Other figures were swarming round the one remaining boat, frantically attempting to launch her.

Bob's jaw tightened.

"Going to be a close thing," he muttered. Roddy gave a barely perceptible nod. Things had to be carried with a high hand if they were going to come through with their lives—to say nothing of capturing the Raven. . . .

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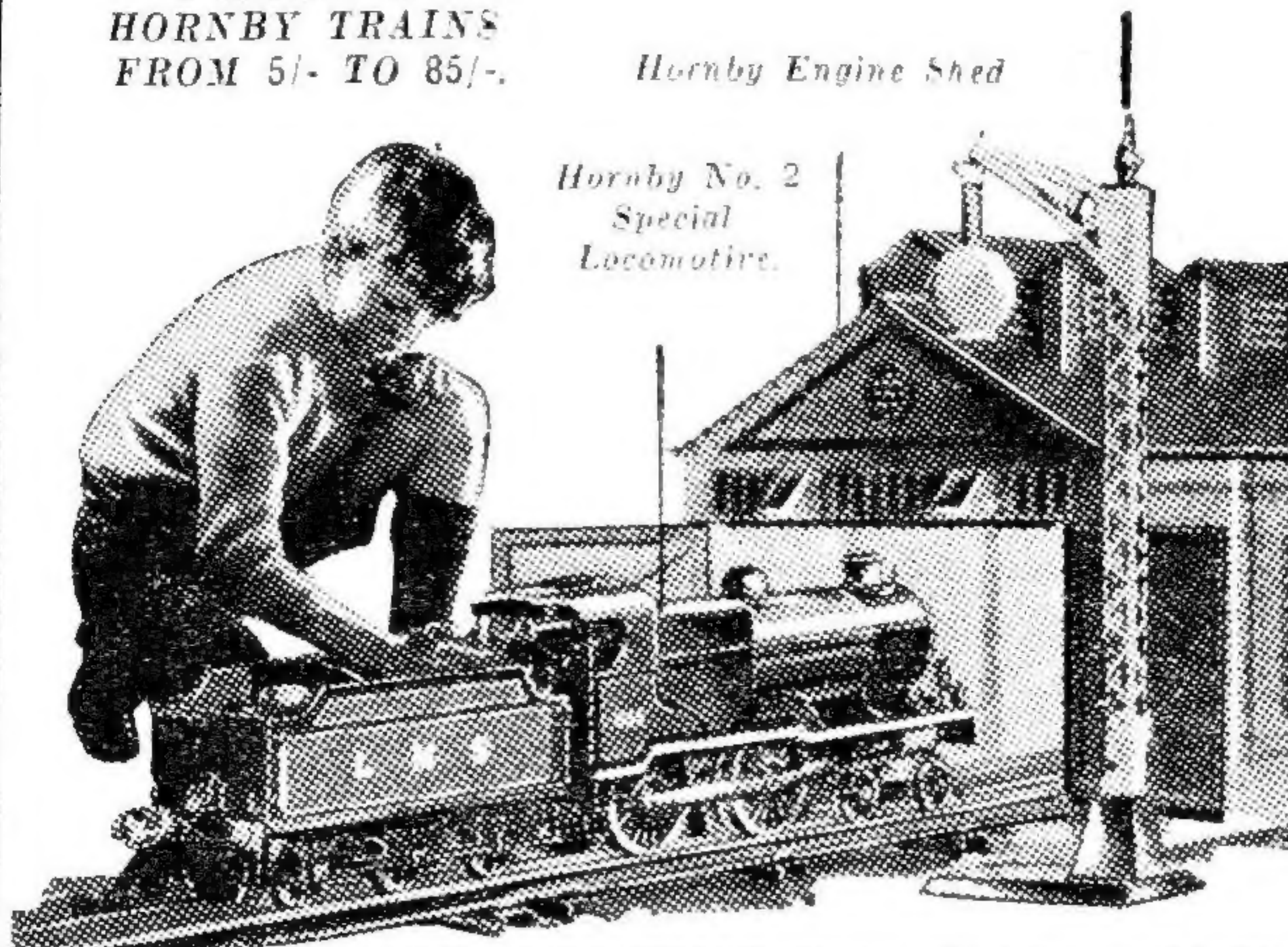
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OLD SWAN

LIVERPOOL

His voice rang loudly above the subdued muttering of the men on the deck.

"Listen! There's a new cap'n aboard this craft. It's not La Tollée any longer. It's me! Got that?"

There was a throaty growl from the pirates. A thick-set fellow, with immense arms swinging down to his knees, shuffled forward.

"An' who might ye be?" he snarled. "Sink me! 'Monkey' Barbados ain't a-takin' no orders from a swab as ain't older'n a cab'n boy."

Roddy's jaw jutted dangerously. His finger tightened on the trigger of the automatic—itched to pull it. Swift action now would save endless trouble later; but he hesitated to shoot down a fellow in cold blood. Yet something had to be done. Out of the corner of his eye he saw the boat, laden to the gunwhale with cursing men, putting off from the shore.

He decided on a bold stroke. "Like to come up here and tell me that to my face?" he said quietly, looking at Monkey Barbados. "Unless you're scared."

Monkey growled deep in his throat.

"Scared! Sink me! I'll slit y'r throat fer that."

He started forward, eyes blazing; the rest of the crowd surged with him, but a sharp command from Roddy held them back. Monkey mounted the ladder alone, one hand on the haft of his cutlass; reached the poop deck, and jerked the weapon out.

"Scared o' you! Sink me!" He swung the cutlass high... yelled to the men behind to mount the ladder.

It was the moment Roddy had waited for. He measured his distance to the fraction of an inch; then, with every ounce of his strength behind the blow he slammed a straight left across to Monkey's jaw. An astonishing punch—as Roddy meant it to be. The pirate was lifted clean off his feet and sent crashing backwards down the ladder. He hit the deck with a thud that seemed to shake the ship and lay in a still, crumpled heap.

Roddy grinned. "Anybody else like to dispute my word?" he asked. A sullen silence was all the answer he got. Roddy shot a swift glance shoreward. No time to waste now. The boat was well out from the beach, with eight cursing, chanting men dragging at the oars. Roddy almost fancied he could make out the figure of La Tollée in the bows. Panama, too! Had they joined forces to meet the common enemy?

But there was no time to think. His voice cracked like a whip.

"You—and you—and you!" He jabbed his pistol at three of the heftiest ruffians. "Man that capstan, and get the anchor up, and—jump to it!"

His voice commanded obedience, no less than the weapon—strange to the pirates in its deadliness—that fanned the air. He only waited to see the three men spring to their posts—to hear the creak of the anchor rope as it came inboard—then he swiftly pointed out half a dozen more.

"Get that fo'sail hoisted!" he snapped.

One man hesitated... snarled a refusal. Roddy's automatic barked, and the fellow reeled sideways, a bullet through the fleshy part of his arm. The others leapt to it...

Another man was sent to take the helm. Minutes passed—fateful minutes. The boat was a bare cable's length away now. A musket roared, and a ball sang past Bob's head. Roddy fired back. By a miracle of luck he scored a hit, and the man with the musket toppled sideways into the sea as he was recharging his piece. The shot threw the rowers into momentary confusion, and in that moment the anchor came up from the sea-bed.

The *Raven* moved, slowly and almost imperceptibly with the current; the sail, run out now, bellied in the night breeze; and as the craft gathered way, the

helmsman, afraid of what other action might bring, set her head towards the open sea.

The boat dropped astern, spite of the fact that La Tollée was lashing his men with threats and promises to furious efforts.

Roddy grinned at Bob, and Bob grinned back.

"We're through, my bucko pirate," said Roddy.

The Treasure.

RODDY was under no apprehensions about the uncertainty of his position. For the moment he and Bob were in command of the *Raven*, but he knew that any one of the twenty ruffians, who, at the pistol's threat, had helped to bring the ship away from Half-Moon Isle, would, should the opportunity occur, cheerfully stab him in the back.

So he took what precautions he could against that happening. With the *Raven* scudding away from La Tollée's island with a following wind, he paraded his crew on the moonlit deck. They were the toughest bunch of ruffians he had ever seen.

Their arsenal went overboard—all except a couple of pistols which Bob stuck into his belt. A search below decks resulted in the discovery of further weapons—and something else.

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